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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

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The aim of "The Russian Review" is to present a non-partisan interpretation of Russian history, civilization, and culture. The Review invites contributions by authors of divergent views, but the opinions expressed in any individual article in this journal are not necessarily those of the editors.

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# East and West in Soviet Ideology

BY GEORGE C. GUINS

## I

"I BELIEVE that where Poland begins, Europe ends", says the German, Beckman, in the novel *The Rape of Europe* by the Soviet writer, Fedin.<sup>1</sup> This point of view in regard to Russia was indeed quite prevalent in Europe. In the eyes of a European, beyond the Russian or even Polish frontier lay Asia.

The Russians had valid reasons for objecting to this opinion. Neither Russia's history, nor her geography, nor her ethnography, nor, in fact, her entire culture, give any justification for considering Russia an Asiatic country.

"Let us consider the matter," a Russian retorts to his European opponents, "from her earliest days, the so-called Kiev period, Russia was closely connected with the European world of that day." And he begins to cite the well-known arguments of the Russian Westerners. Kiev was one of the richest and most cosmopolitan cities of her time. It was situated on the crossroads of the trade routes leading not only to the North and South but also from the West to the countries of the far-flung East. The Mongol conquest had separated Russia from the European West for about two hundred and fifty years, but her culture, born before that time, had not been eradicated.

With the beginning of the fifteenth century relations between Russia and Europe took on a more animated character and, after Peter the Great opened wide the "window into Europe" Russia began to play an increasingly important part in the course of European history. Her military leaders, her diplomats, her statesmen, and her scholars became world authorities in their fields. A series of world conferences took place in Russia, and to her Emperor, Nicholas II, belonged the honor of initiating the Hague Disarmament Conference.

The main portion of the Russian Empire lies in Asia. The development of Asiatic Russia, however, depends wholly on the European part of Russia. Men, capital, training—European Russia must provide them all for her Asiatic regions. Russia can be iden-

<sup>1</sup>Fedin, *Pokhishchenie Evropy*, Gosizd., 1934-36 v.I, p. 221.

tified with her Asiatic possessions just as much as, shall we say, France can be identified with her African colonies or Britain with her Indo-Chinese colonies.

The population of Russia comprises many Asiatic nationalities, it is true, but almost three quarters of her population is composed of Slavic peoples, so that the inhabitants of Great Russia alone make up over one half of her entire population.

The most casual attempt to compare the culture of Russia with the cultures of Asiatic countries would show the error of considering Russia an Asiatic country. The music, arts, and theatre of China, Japan, or India are just as basically different from those of Russia as they are from those of France or England. A Russian feels just as much a foreigner in China or India as does a German, an Englishman, or an American. It is a matter of a different way of life, different food, different clothes, different ethics, different attitudes.

Russia belongs to the family of European nations by right of her history and culture; her geography and ethnography are also much more European than Asiatic. This would be the answer a Russian would give a European to his assertion that on the Russian frontier in Europe Asia begins.

Now let us turn our back on Europe and face Asia. Nations considering themselves true Asiatics call the Russians Europeans. They see in them just such "white foreigners" as the rest of the aliens. What do the Russians have to say to this? When Stalin made his non-aggression pact with Matsuoka in April, 1941, on the eve of Germany's attack upon the Soviet Union and that of Japan upon Pearl Harbor, he told him: "We are both Asiatics and we understand each other." The Soviet Union owes much of its success in Asia to the fact that Russians can draw closer to the peoples of Asia than West Europeans and have a clearer understanding of the Asiatic character. "We may not be true Asiatics," say the Russians, "but we have held some parts of Asia for over 300 years; our first settlers have become intermixed with the aboriginal population, they have become half-Yakuts and half-Buriats themselves. The French have coined the phrase: 'Scratch a Russian, you will find a Tartar.' It is also fitting to say: 'Scratch a Yakut or a Buriat and you will find a Russian.'" The Cossacks of the Transbaikals or the Amur Cossack regions may be easily taken for Mongolians because of their broad cheekbones and their dark complexions.

"We are closely connected with Europe," a Russian would go on, "but we are also closely connected with Asia." Russia numbers 21



million Turko-Tartars and over one million Mongolians as well as some seven million Caucasian tribesmen who have since time immemorial represented a link between Asia and Europe.

"Let our culture be that of Europe," the Russian will continue. "We nevertheless have a great affinity for the East; we are not strangers to you of Asia; we are not merely Europeans, we are a mixture of Asia and Europe."

This imaginary conversation reflects the existing ideas and conceptions in regard to Russian culture, often expressed in Russian literature, which divided Russian thinkers into two camps: the Westerners, leaning toward Europe, and the Slavophiles, standing for Russian individuality.

The Slavophiles affirmed that Russian culture developed in a manner different from that of Europe. They attached particular importance to the religious foundation of Russian life, and one of them, Aksakov, launched the expression, "Holy Russia." In Russia, the Slavophiles said, *property* is communal (village commune); in Europe—individual. In Russia the *family* is patriarchal; in Europe—individualistic. Even Russian autocracy was considered by the Slavophiles as patriarchal, and the Russian Tsar was regarded as the father of the nation. The Slavophiles did not consider Russia an Asiatic country, but, contrasting Russia with the West, they suggested a bond between Russian history and Eastern influences. And since Asia, like Russia, was not subject to the influence of the Roman law and its individualistic principles, some parallels between Russia and Asiatic nations suggested themselves.

In our day, both the Slavophiles and the Westerners are a thing of the past. Over a hundred years have elapsed since the rise of the first Slavophiles, and conditions have so changed as to render futile any speculation as to the importance and influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Russian village commune, the peculiarities of the Russian national juridical concepts, or Russian patriarchal family. Perhaps the only relic of the "good old times" of patriarchal Russia is Stalin's autocracy, as he is usually called "Father of the Peoples of the Soviet Union." At the same time, there have also been radical changes in Western Europe. Under present conditions she could scarcely be considered a stronghold of individualism and private property.

At first glance, thus, the conflict between the Westerners and the Slavophiles is a matter concerning history alone. But, as long as Russian national consciousness exists, the problem of Westernism

and Slavophilism does not completely lose its significance, and Soviet literature continues to refer to these ideologies of the nineteenth century.

## II

Soon after the October (Bolshevik) Revolution the poet Alexander Blok in his famed "Scythians," resurrected the tradition of the Russian writers who had often treated in their works the question of the interrelations of Russia with both the West and the East.

"Yes, we are Scythian with slanted and greedy eyes," wrote Blok, prophetically threatening the West with an invasion from the East.

The relationship of the Soviets and the West is analysed in two novels: *The Rape of Europe*, by Fedin, and *East and West*, by Mme Voinova. Both writers are considered foremost Soviet authors.

The plot of Fedin's novel is elementary but confused in execution. The author leads his reader from one country to another, from city to city, and finally to a lumber region in the far North, by the White Sea. The heroes of the novel are: A Soviet columnist at first traveling through Europe and later returning home filled with impressions and boasting a romantic conquest; a prominent lumber man, a Dutchman, working lumber concessions by the White Sea and dealing in Russian lumber abroad; and, finally, a young woman of Russian extraction, who had escaped abroad, driven by the unbearable tedium of Soviet life and its grey dreariness, and who had married the nephew of the lumber man.

The columnist had fallen in love with the concessioner's daughter but she died prematurely. During the funeral he saw, to his amazement, a double of the departed one, who proved to be the above-described Russian woman, now married to the concessioner's nephew and on a visit to the uncle. The young woman felt drawn to her countryman and ended by falling in love with him. In selecting a title for his novel (*Rape of Europe*) the author obviously had in mind the abduction of Europa by Zeus in the guise of a bull, who had enticed the beautiful maiden to mount upon his smooth back and suddenly carried her off to Crete.

However, in Fedin's novel the center of gravity lies not in the seduction of a handsome woman who, having left a European for the sake of a clever Soviet writer, in the end again leaves Russia, this time in the company of her uncle. The point is in the relationship of Russia and Europe. The lumber man is displeased with Soviet business methods, with the faultfinding and delays which are

created on purpose to force him to abandon his concession. He came to Russia convinced that he would be able to assert his rights. He comes to the conclusion that this is not possible, he sees with amazement how quickly and competently people who in his eyes are savages manage their own affairs without help from foreigners, how enthusiastically the young people work, and how easily the most modern techniques are adopted in Russia, and in the end he gives up, becomes reconciled to the loss of his concession, and agrees to become simply the representative of a Soviet agency for the sale of Soviet lumber abroad.

The true "Rape of Europe" in this novel is the adaptation of European technique and its application to Soviet policies and socialist organization. The Dutchman, Philip van Rossum, is hopeful of the return of Russia to the family of European peoples. "Russia," says he, "must return to the family of European nations, as there is no other way of making her renounce her folly and errors. While doing business with us she will be forced to alter her economic system, reconcile it with ours and in time reinstate her old economic organization." To these hopes the Russian hero of the novel makes the following proud answer: "Here in the East a blinding star has soared up. Our world has grown boundlessly. Never in old Russia has there existed such knowledge of Europe, never has this knowledge been so exact, her secrets so clearly revealed and elucidated." "When I approached the Palace of Culture in Dniepropetrovsk and the lights of the factories were on and the Palace shone with its hundreds of windows, its very size, the power and endless number of its lights made me comprehend somehow with my entire being that this was precisely how we wished to make our life: spacious, light, filled with lofty meaning and dignity. . ."

This is the picture of a true "rape of Europe", in the sense of appropriating her technical culture, which, in the East, in a country which Europeans have become accustomed to regard as Asia ("where Poland begins, Europe ends"), becomes transformed into the new culture of a workers' state. It is in vain, from the standpoint of a Soviet citizen, that Europeans hope for Russia to return to the family of European countries in their present condition. "This is a workers' state. We are upon its ramparts. On the other side is the enemy."

The plot of Mme Voinova's novel *East and West*<sup>2</sup> is as uncompli-

<sup>2</sup>A. Voinova, *Vostok i Zapad*, Gosizdat, 1933.

cated as the Fedin novel. Its interest lies mainly in the thoughts and local color relating to the period of feverish construction. The heroes of this novel are Russian and foreign engineers engaged to work in Russia, among them a young man, the son of a Russian emigré, who had arrived with a French passport with the intention of staying in his home country if this would prove possible. He falls in love with a Komsomol girl, and meets another youth, a relative, a Soviet college student, a hundred-percent loyal Soviet citizen despite the fact that his father had been exiled as a counter-revolutionary.

This is what the heroes of this novel have to say about Europe: "In Europe there is moral chaos, there is not one new idea, no hope for the future, spiritual death," says the Communist engineer, Bagentzov. "What a picture," says a non-partyman, the engineer Gusev: "On one side, the vanishing West; on the other, the U.S.S.R., a scene of tremendous historical processes." "If we fail," says he on another occasion, "Europe will also be smashed; we will do it. I do hate this Europe from the bottom of my heart."

The above-mentioned Russian emigré, returning to Russia in the guise of a Frenchman, comes to the same conclusion: "I sense here a totally different existence. In the West, work has lost its meaning and humanity is doomed to idleness. Nowadays nowhere, in no country, is work approached with such fervor, nowhere is life treated so seriously as in the land of the Soviets." "Here everything differs from Europe. Over there men have lost their souls, everywhere there is futility and chaos, whereas you have life, ideals, and faith in the future."

Similar thoughts are expressed by foreign engineers studying what is going on around them in the Soviet Union. The German, Bruener, admits that "European intellectuals have lost the meaning of their existence . . . In the world . . . side by side with the economic crisis another and more terrible crisis is taking place, the crisis of the spirit, the crisis of science, ethics, and art . . . In this dreadful hour everybody's hopes are directed toward the U.S.S.R., to the only spot on the globe where one may find consolation and the meaning of life, for men here have ideals."

The German is seconded by the Frenchman, Duval: "On one hand, we see the mechanized world with anarchy reigning in the state and among people; on the other, Russia, a huge condenser of vital forces, with youth and energy, with every change to win a hegemony over the world."

Considering Europe a doomed world, the heroes of Mme Voinova's novel do not deny their cultural debt to the West: "Europe has given us Marxism; we shall repay you with our constructive Socialism. We had, so to speak, an outstanding account; now, I believe, we have settled in full for our bills." "Two roads lay before us: either to yield completely to the irrational principle and follow the Slavophiles in continuing to build 'Holy Russia'; this would have been the triumph of our mystical substance, and we would have been drawn back toward the East; this was one road, and we did not take it; or putting an end to 'Holy Russia' and mysticism, to follow in the footsteps of the Westerners and do what we are doing now, that is, take care of our earthly existence and advance toward the West. We took the second road. The Western half has won."

The evaluation of the reforms of Peter the Great has always been the touchstone of the attitude toward the West. Alexei Tolstoy's novel *Peter the Great*, several volumes long, appeared before and during World War II, and the success it has been enjoying in the Soviet Union serves as the most convincing proof of the fact that the Soviets consider themselves heirs to Western culture. However, as the above quotations demonstrate, the heirs believe that they have outgrown their fathers. The West is in a state of decay, and the Soviet Union brings its young and rich new culture to supplant the exhausted one; such is the conviction of Soviet leaders.

A conviction of the superiority of material things, technical knowledge, and education bring the Soviets to a definite denial of Slavophile dreaming and leanings to the olden days: "The truly great, boundless possibilities lie not in the exotic Russia of the days of Tsar Gorokh,<sup>3</sup> but in the victorious Revolution of the working class. These possibilities are to be found not in grotesque flowing sleeves, not under the mortarboards of professors lecturing on Dostoevsky, but in a material world, in the prospects of liberated peoples." Strange as it may seem, however, this self-assurance of the saviors of mankind coincides strikingly with the teachings of the Slavophiles, who, just as the Soviet ideologists today, had been sure of the doom of the West.

The Slavophile Kireevsky spoke a hundred years ago of the messianic rôle of Russia when he denounced Europe for her vicious belief in her own righteousness and perfection and for her attachment to luxury and earthly comforts, and lauded Russia for her

<sup>3</sup>A legendary figure of Russian folklore.



simplicity and realization of her own shortcomings. A hundred years ago the Slavophile Khomiakov prophesied the doom of the West:

"Yet woe: A century has passed, and a death pall lies  
Over the West. Deep shall the darkness lie.  
Hearken to the voice of Destiny, spring forth in new glory,  
Awake, slumbering East!"

"There is a curse hanging over Europe," Dostoevsky said. "Europe shall be flooded with blood. Our century will end in something elemental and dreadful. The decisive rôle will be played by the Slavs. The reunited East will utter the new word to humanity." Disappointed in Europe, Dostoevsky concluded his lifelong search by placing his hopes in Asia. In a turning toward Asia he saw the goal of Russian politics, the Russian mission of civilization, the creation of a new Russia.

### III

At one time Soviet Russia did turn toward Asia, and her attitude toward the East is no less intriguing than that toward the West. In it lie her political plans and her cultural sympathies. We must again seek the help of Soviet novelists. This time let us consider Boris Pilnyak's *Volga Flows to the Caspian Sea*,<sup>4</sup> and P. Pavlenko's *In the East*.

Boris Pilnyak in his chaotic novel describes the construction of a canal joining Moscow to the Volga and entailing the razing of a series of villages.

"One half of Kolomna<sup>5</sup> was swamped, the other half remaining on a peninsula. Scores of villages and hamlets were abandoning their ancient sites."

Pilnyak does not deal directly with the problems of the relationship of Russian culture to the cultures of the East, but he often speaks of the transformation of the psychology of men engrossed in grandiose construction and becoming used to new conditions:

"Russian shirts and peasants' linen were replaced after working hours by European dress, and sheets began to appear on their beds."

Two worlds seemed to meet upon the canal: Asia and Europe, and Kolomna's Kremlin stood as a symbol of the two worlds:

"If you look at the Kremlin from the Marina tower, the Asiatic

<sup>4</sup>*The Volga Flows to the Caspian Sea*. Translated from the Russian by Charles Malamuth. N. Y., Cosmopolitan Book Corp., 1931.

<sup>5</sup>Kolomna, one of the oldest cities in the Moscow region, where, according to the novel, the engineer staff had its headquarters.

Kolomna Kremlin suddenly transforms itself in a marvelous way into European mediaeval Gothic, precisely because of the Marina Tower.<sup>6</sup> The Asiatic Kremlin suddenly shouted out wildly in its Asiatic strain, and the European, Gothic, maidenly Marina Tower smiled sarcastically."

However, the most significant thing is the statement of Professor Poletika, who inspired the construction of the canal. His words paint a picture on a huge scale, demonstrating the change in the rôles of the East and the West:

In the memory of mankind flourishing countries have disappeared—Assyria, Babylon, Mesopotamia. Arabia had created a great science—the philosophy, the religion of Islam, which still survives in certain countries, but Arabia itself is now the prey of sands and scorching heat. In Mongolian legends are reminiscences about a tiger that could walk across Mongolia from one end to the other without getting dust on its paws; so it used to be, but now you will only find sand and scorching heat there; in those Gardens of Allah and Buddha, a desert stretching now from Shamo to the Sea of Aral. . . .

The desert advances against Man. Now the desert is advancing on Western Siberia and on European Russia, moving from the Caspian Sea, carrying with it the Aralo-Caspian sands. The desert is on the threshold of the Donets Basin. There is no water in the Donets Basin; there is a shortage of it there. . . .

Russia has always been the outpost and protector of Europe . . . from the third to the fifteenth century when we were attacked by the Asiatic nomads, those innumerable Alans, Goths, Huns . . . we, who lived on the Russian plains, held them back with our flesh, with our flesh saving the West from being wiped off the face of the earth, as we Russians have done on several occasions. We shall check the deserts once more, again saving Europe. Now, however, we protect Europe no longer with our flesh, but with our knowledge.

These words, like the entire novel, reflect the new concept of the relationship of Russia to the East. According to it, the East has been awaiting the results of the creative activity of the Russian people, armed with knowledge and mastery of the elements which Asia was powerless to subdue. Russia is carrying to the East a culture superior to the one animating the East today.

A similar viewpoint may be discovered in the novel *In the East*, by Pavlenko. This novel was published almost on the eve of World War II, in 1937. It depicts feverish preparations for a coming war with Japan. Evidently, the attack had been expected to come from

<sup>6</sup>Named after Marina Mnishek, a Polish girl who had married Dimitri, the Imposter, during the Time of Troubles and tragically perished in Russia. She lived for a while in Kolomna.



both the West and the East. Soviet Russia had been anticipating a difficult and decisive fight for her position on the Pacific, and the author's purpose was to point out to the enemy that the Soviet government was not asleep and that the war against Japanese imperialism would be fought by the Chinese and Koreans as well, that Communist propaganda had already penetrated deeply into the body of the Eastern nations.

The novel dwells upon two basic ideas and appears to have been written by a man thoroughly familiar with the East. His first idea is that Eastern culture must make way for Western technical knowledge. Often through the novel the author, in close harmony with the dominating Soviet passion for technical knowledge, glowingly describes the conquest of knowledge and the new mechanized culture over primitive nature and the acceptance of this new culture by the Asiatic peoples in the realization that this is their only weapon for the protection of their independence.

Here is one such picture: "That year men appeared in all manner of places. Some arrived by train from the West and before they had had time to take a good look around, they mounted horses and disappeared into the taiga armed to the teeth with the paraphernalia of exploration and construction. Others disembarked from the Baltic or Black Sea ships, yellow with sickness or tropical fevers. Still others flew in on planes. The taiga sucked them all in without trace, and the town remained deserted as before. Gliders appeared on the Amur; in the north of Chukotka, aero-sledges were being tested. A drunken Chukcha in the market-place in Kerb swore that he had seen a whole townful of aero-sledges which had roared past his eyes like a whistling vision." Half-savage inhabitants of the taiga see the wonders of new culture and become themselves transformed: "The Nanaites acquired cigarette lighters and cigarettes of Rostov manufacture."<sup>7</sup>

Japan has fully adopted the mechanized culture of the West and as a result of this adoption has become extremely powerful; young China realizes full well that it, too, must follow the same pattern; in a conversation with an American, a Chinese revolutionary organizer of guerilla movement discusses in this manner the changes taking place in China:

"For twenty years I have seen no Chinese. There are none any more, mister. Only the gods in the temples have remained Chinese.

<sup>7</sup>Pavlenko. *Na Vostoke*, Gosizdat, 1937.

As for us living men, we have become divided into shopkeepers and laborers, peasants, and bankers. If we were to discuss the peculiarities of our culture, there are far more American or Japanese traits in it than purely Chinese ones."

While the first idea of the novel in question is that the East is being transformed and must be so transformed with the help of Western culture and technical knowledge, the second idea deals with the political reeducation of the Eastern nations and the approaching World Revolution. The novel describes an imaginary war with Japan. Soviet paratroopers are dropped far behind Japanese lines and are greeted by organized Chinese guerillas. In Japan itself Japanese Communists are at work and keep in contact with Soviet leaders. Soviet Russia emerges victorious. However, as one of the heroes points out, this is not the end of warfare. "Japan is of no importance. The war will end only with succeeding generations: those you are raising now, they shall be the victors."

As for Eastern perspectives in general, the author has this to say: "China will grow into a powerful Soviet country. Japan will achieve happiness (having overthrown the militarists and consolidated her Communist party). India will become free."

#### IV

The above quoted passages are enough to give a picture of the reigning trends and political attitudes of the Soviet people, or at least of the standpoint which the Soviet government wishes them to adopt. New Russia belongs neither to the West, which in their eyes is decaying and is doomed to destruction, nor the East, which is about to be transformed under the influence of the materialist culture of the West and reeducated in the spirit of the political thought of Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia has surpassed the West, having absorbed its technical knowledge and rejected its economic structure and political organization. This has been especially stressed in the Soviet press after the end of the War.

One still encounters so-called intellectuals who, having returned home, are ready to fall into ecstasies before everything, without exception, that they have seen abroad. . . They do not notice their servility before the spiritually empty bourgeois culture. Our goal is to hinder the infiltration to our stage of this reactionary bourgeois ideology and morality.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>*Pravda*, November 17, 1946. Some authors awarded the Stalin prize during 1947-48, especially Ilya Ehrenburg (*The Storm*) and Pavlenko (*Happiness*) depict representatives of the doomed capitalist world and the advantages enjoyed by Communists in the struggle for the new world.

At the All-Union Conference of young Soviet writers Fadeev, a famous writer and president of the Association of Soviet Writers, said: "Our literature reflects a new order higher than that of any bourgeois-democratic country, and a culture which exceeds many times bourgeois culture, and has the right to teach the others a new universal morality."<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, Soviet leaders consider Soviet culture as surpassing that of the East. Soviet culture has developed on the foundation of Western culture, but has also absorbed the culture of the East and has surpassed both of them. On occasion of the Moscow 800th anniversary the *Moscow News* published an article under the title "Moscow—a Socialist City," in which we find the following:

Can Moscow be called a European city? No, Soviet cities, and, particularly, Moscow, are not "European." They are Socialist.

Neither Moscow nor any other new or reconstructed Soviet city has much in common with the established conception of a modern European city. Moscow stands a beacon of light for the East and the West.

The Soviet Union is now creating a new "universal," "all-human" culture to which belongs the future. "Russia will save mankind by combining within herself the principles of both the East and the West."<sup>10</sup>

The idea of a combination of Eastern and Western principles in Russian culture reminds one of a new ideology created by a group of Russian emigrés in Western Europe under the name of Eurasianism. Partisans of this new trend in Russian social thought, and new interpretation of the peculiarities of Russian culture, have shifted the center of gravity to the geographic situation and eastern associations of the Russian people. According to this new school of social and political ideas, Russia is an independent and original world.

In spite of its congeniality to the dominant Soviet outlook, Eurasianism, however, receives little sympathy in the Soviet Union. The leaders of the Soviet Union do not intend to confine their régime within the frame of any geographic area. Expansion of their system is potentially limitless. They do not separate the U.S.S.R. from the West, and, at the same time, they do not want to appear in the eyes of the East in thoroughly Western dress. The huge edifices created by the Soviets in the capitals of the Asiatic Soviet republics show some traces of Eastern architecture and oriental ornamentation,

<sup>9</sup>*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, February 22, 1947.

<sup>10</sup>Voinova, *Vostok i Zapad*, p. 17.

but they are Western buildings, nevertheless. The political leaders of these Asiatic republics wear their national dress, but they are imbued to the marrow of their bones with Soviet Communist ideology. Soviet culture is neither Western nor Eastern. It is the culture of a new-born world which, the Soviet leaders are convinced, will supplant the old one.

A long time ago, the poet Tiutchev with his Pan-slavic and imperialist sympathies imagined the frontiers of Russia stretching—

“From the Nile to the Neva, from the Elbe to China,  
From the Volga to the Euphrates, from the Ganges  
to the Danube. . .”

Soviet writers ridicule this Russian geography according to Tiutchev. The same Russian geography, however, is being recreated under other slogans and with the help of other ideas and methods. To this end a new culture is being forged, on a Western foundation, but neither of the West nor of the East.

# General Vlasov's Official Biography

BY GEORGE FISCHER

## I

THE Soviet general Vlasov remains one of the most intriguing and yet least known figures of World War II.

Not much more than the following has become public so far: In 1941, as a Lieutenant General in the Red Army, Vlasov was a leading figure in the Soviet defense of embattled Moscow.<sup>1</sup> The following year, upon capture by the Reichswehr, he became a bitterly anti-Soviet leader of the German-sponsored "Russian Liberation Movement."<sup>2</sup> In 1946, after arrest by a U. S. Army unit, he was hanged in Moscow as a traitor.<sup>3</sup>

Why did a Soviet hero-general become almost overnight a militant opponent of his invasion-beset government? How intimate and Quisling-like was Vlasov's collaboration with Nazi Germany? What light is thrown on the Soviet system by this active defection of General Vlasov, half a dozen or more other Soviet generals, and

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Pravda*, December 13, 1941. Four weeks after a visit by C. L. Sulzberger, Walter Kerr, and other foreign correspondents (see the *New York Times* of December 19, 1941), Eve Curie, the French writer, interviewed General Vlasov at the front. In *Journey Among Warriors* (New York, 1943, pp. 180 and 184), Miss Curie wrote: "Vlasov was one of the young army leaders whose fame was rapidly rising among the people of the U.S.S.R." She added of Vlasov: "He kept muttering: 'Everybody, everybody, must fight the fascists.' Here was a man who waged war with something more than determination, something more than courage: he waged it with passion."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *Novoe Slovo*, Russian-language newspaper in Berlin, March 17, 1943. Frederick L. Schuman, in *Soviet Politics at Home and Abroad* (New York, 1946, p. 631) echoes a later statement by Eve Curie that this "Major General A. A. Vlasov" is not to be confused with the "Lt. Gen. Andrei A. Vlasov who was captured by the Germans . . ." The following facts seem to indicate, however, that on the contrary this was the same General Vlasov: 1. Ten days after Miss Curie interviewed Vlasov, he was promoted from Major General to Lieutenant General, according to the *Pravda* of January 25, 1942. 2. The promotion order in that issue of the *Pravda* lists the general as "Andrei Andreevich Vlasov." 3. The appearance of General Vlasov in a picture in the *Pravda* of December 13, 1941,—referring to him as the "Major General A. A. Vlasov" familiar to Miss Curie—is identical with that of a picture in *Volya Naroda* of January 31, 1945. The newspaper *Volya Naroda* was the organ in Germany of Vlasov's own movement.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *Pravda* and *New York Times* of August 2, 1946.

many thousands of Soviet nationals who found themselves under German jurisdiction as war prisoners and forced laborers?

At a time when the Western world is in constant want of insight into Soviet society, the answers to these questions could help to explain two key problems. Uppermost there is of course the question of anti-Stalin sentiment within the U.S.S.R. The other concerns the implications, past and future, of the uncounted mass of Soviet émigré "non-returners." Centered in Western Germany, the new Soviet emigration continues to venerate Vlasov as its symbol.<sup>4</sup>

Presented below is the translation of a biography of General Vlasov. For perhaps the first time this translation offers material in English on which to base authoritative answers to the perplexing "Vlasov question." In the biography the first mention of Vlasov's cooperation with German authorities concerns an initial statement in December, 1942. The full text of the "Smolensk Program," contained in that statement, but not reproduced in the biography, is as follows:

1. Abolition of forced labor and guaranteeing the worker a real right to labor leading to material welfare.
2. Abolition of collective farms and planned transfer of land into private peasant property.
3. Reestablishment of trade, handicraft, artisan trades, and the creation of opportunity for private initiative to participate in the economic life of the country.
4. Enabling the intelligentsia to create freely for the welfare of its people.
5. Guaranteeing of social justice and the protection of working people from exploitation.
6. Introduction for working people of a real right to education, to leisure, to a secure old age.
7. Termination of the reign of terror and violence, introduction of actual freedom of religion, conscience, speech, assembly, and press. Guarantee of the inviolability of person and personal residence.
8. Guarantee of freedom for subject nationalities.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. George Fischer, "The New Soviet Emigration." *Russian Review*, January, 1949, pp. 6-19. In addition to the war-time bulk of this unprecedented exodus from the U.S.S.R., Marguerite Higgins, Berlin correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, states in "Now the Russians are Fleeing Russia," (*Saturday Evening Post*, June 4, 1949, p. 29) that "... an estimated 13,000 to 14,000 young Russians are known to have fled the Soviet system since 1945. Other thousands have arrived unknown to Western officialdom. Some, through bribery, forgery, and good luck get as far as France, North Africa or South Africa. But most live illegally in the American zone of occupation in Germany, where their presence, if not welcomed, is at least officially winked at." Cf. also *Thirteen Who Fled*, Louis Fischer, ed., (New York, 1949), p. 17.



9. The liberation of the political prisoners of Bolshevism, and the return from prisons and camps to the Motherland of all those who suffered detention in the struggle against Bolshevism.
10. Rebuilding of the cities and villages destroyed during the war, at the expense of the state.
11. Rebuilding of the factories belonging to the state, which were destroyed during the war.
12. Refusal to make payment on the enslaving agreements concluded by Stalin with the Anglo-American capitalists.
13. Providing a minimum living wage to disabled veterans and their families.

This program was reproduced by Boris I. Nicolaevsky, Russian émigré journalist and historian, in the first extensive study of Vlasov published in the United States. A Social Democrat (Menshevik) himself, Mr. Nicolaevsky comments that "all the separate demands included in the 'Program' are of such a nature that, with one exception (Point 12), any Russian democrat can subscribe to them." Suggesting that Vlasov was not clearly submissive or pro-Nazi, Mr Nicolaevsky also notes that in his declarations following capture "there is not even a hint of bowing to the 'Fuehrer' which in those years was as mandatory for every author then writing in Germany as worship of Stalin is for an author now writing in Moscow."<sup>5</sup>

The biography of Vlasov, which follows, mentions only briefly the interesting fate of the Russian Liberation Army, known as ROA. Headed by Vlasov, it was the military arm of his Russian Liberation Movement. After the date of publication of this Vlasov biography, the short-lived Russian Liberation Army witnessed three key developments prior to its disintegration with VE Day in May, 1945.

First came the issuance of the "Prague Manifesto" in November, 1944. This document was to herald a far greater rôle in the flagging German war effort for the Vlasovites and other Russian anti-Soviet groups. Cited today by surviving Vlasovite leaders as best reflecting the ideology of Vlasov's war-time movement, its basic program consisted of the following:

1. Overthrow of the "Stalin tyranny."
2. Return to the liberties of the February, 1917, "People's" Revolution.
3. Immediate and honorable peace with Germany.
4. The creation of a new, free Russian state "without Bolsheviks and exploiters."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup>*Novoe Slovo*, March 17, 1943, and B. I. Nicolaevsky, "Porazhenchestvo 1941-1945 Godov i Gen. A. A. Vlasov, Materyaly dlya Istorii" (The Defeatist Movement in 1941-1945 and Gen. A. A. Vlasov, Material Toward a History), *Novy Zhurnal*, (New York, 1948), Vol. XIX, pp. 216-217, 220.

<sup>6</sup>*Volya Naroda*, November 15, 1944.



Secondly, according to surviving Vlasovite leaders, there was the continuing failure on the part of Germany to keep its promises to Vlasov. These promises, they state, were to arm a far larger contingent of volunteers from among Soviet prisoners and to subordinate all existing Russian-manned units of the German forces to Vlasov's ROA—which was supposed to be autonomous from the Reichswehr, the Gestapo, and S. S. troops. But the Russian-manned anti-resistance "Balkan Korpus" and the equally infamous "S. S. Battalion" thus remained split among German commands, although at times they were designated by themselves or others as "Vlasov Troops."

As in the case of other aspects of the war-time Vlasov movement, there is little if any published material up to date to verify partisan charges and counter-charges on official German policy toward the Vlasovites. Light was thrown upon this question, however, on one of the few occasions when the Nuremberg Trials touched upon collaboration of Soviet nationals with Nazi Germany. Giving a foretaste of the unceasing high-level German intrigues which surrounded the ROA, testimony on that occasion by Alfred Rosenberg, Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, indicated that early in World War II Hitler sided with the Nazi leaders opposed to any political movements among Soviet nationals. For such movements, the Nazi leaders held, might in the event of German victory press for post-war Russian autonomy and, therefore, handicap German economic and demographic schemes.<sup>7</sup> Rebecca West, in her masterly treatise on pro-Nazi treason in World War II, may also be corroborating the Vlasovite contention that its anti-Stalin movement was obstructed rather than abetted by the top Nazi leadership:

The Nazis were prone, in all sorts of circumstances, to make a peculiar error. When one of their enemies became their friend, they went on treating him as an enemy. However ready he might be to serve their interests, however much they might need his help, they continue to savage him. The great historical example of this curious trick is their treatment of the Russian soldiers and civilians who, by tens of thousands, gladly surrendered to them as they invaded Russian territory in 1941 and 1942. These people who might have been their most valuable aids then and forever after, they packed into cattle trains and sent off to camps where they were starved and tortured. Later they were fetched out and invited to fight alongside the Germans, but by that time their

<sup>7</sup>*Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Tribunal, (Nuremberg, 1947), Vol. XI, pp. 477-490, 507-509.*

enthusiasm was not what it had been and the treatment they received in training and at the front failed to revive it.<sup>8</sup>

In the third development, occurring after the issuance of the following biography, Vlasov's army, in the end built up to nearly three partially equipped divisions, participated in only one major military action. This was on the Russian front at the end of the war, and—according to Vlasovites—the ROA then left the front when its autonomy was challenged by German commanders. This it did just in time to play—for a split second—a deciding rôle in the liberation of Prague in May, 1945. Before vanishing out of sight after VE Day, the ROA fought the German occupation troops in Prague alongside Czech patriots, prior to the approach of Soviet and American troops.<sup>9</sup>

The above, if substantiated in detail, would indicate that the Vlasov movement, though made up of "at least half a million" members,<sup>10</sup> did not provide Hitler with much fighting support, either against the Soviets or the Western allies. To that majority of the Soviet-bred exiles which today fervently pays homage to Vlasov, the further considerations that at the moment Hitler was Stalin's major foe, and that conceivably Vlasov was only elaborating on Lenin's defeatist policy against the Tsarist government in World War I, might be decisive. From an American viewpoint, however, the gravest charge against Vlasov's "Free Russia" movement is apt to remain the same. That American charge concerns the ever highly questionable morality of fighting a Stalin with a Hitler.

Regarding this amorality and the apparent failure of their collaboration with Nazi Germany, some Vlasovites point to a parallel now. This parallel is between their own "policy of expediency" and the U.S.-British decision to collaborate closely with the Soviet government against Hitler. They quote especially Churchill's historic statement of June 23, 1941, that "Any man or state who fights against Nazidom will have our aid," when Churchill added

<sup>8</sup>Rebecca West, *The Meaning of Treason*, (New York, 1947), pp. 109-110. On early war-time treatment of captured Soviet nationals by the Germans, see also *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, (Washington, 1946), Vol. III, pp. 126-130.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Ivan H. Peterman, "Prague's Four Fantastic Days," *Saturday Evening Post*, July 14, 1945, and Ansel E. Talbert, "Military Air Power in Europe," *New York Herald Tribune*, July 17, 1949.

<sup>10</sup>This estimate is cited in a 95-page pamphlet, sharply critical of General Vlasov and his war-time followers, by an émigré journalist who, like the above-quoted B. I. Nicolaevsky, is a Russian socialist (Menshevik). Cf. Grigory Aronson, *Pravda o Vlasovtsakh* (The Truth About the Vlasovites), (New York, 1949), p. 7.

the reservation that "The Nazi régime is indistinguishable from the worst features of Bolshevism." These Vlasovites also cite Churchill's action four weeks later, when he quoted and endorsed the statement of Smuts: "let no one say that we are now in league with Communists or are fighting the battle of Communism. . . . [Hitler has not made] us friendly to [Russia's] creed, just as previously he treacherously made her his friend without embracing her Communism."<sup>11</sup>

How is one to approach those political figures who today choose to oppose their established governments under conditions devoid of the moderating alternatives of a free society? How to gain insight into the circumstances and reasoning which lead such leaders to an extremism, moral and tactical, frequently so incomprehensible, as well as distasteful, to the democratic West? How should one, therefore, judge Vlasov and his German-sponsored Russian Liberation Movement? Were the Vlasovites out-and-out quislings, as numerous Americans have held in the past? Or is the Vlasovite claim that they should rather be viewed as the first Soviet-reared "Free Russia" movement successfully seeking to battle Stalin valid?

The biography of Vlasov, which follows, should help to answer this as well as other problems which are so far obscure. Its special value is, first of all, that it is the longest account known to have been published by Vlasov's own Russian Liberation Movement while under the German aegis. Moreover, it is authored, under a *nom de guerre*, by a former Red Army officer who became General Vlasov's aide-de-camp in Germany. This can therefore be considered as the authorized and official biography of Vlasov.

Following is a translation of the full text of General Vlasov's official biography:<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>*Borba*, March-April, 1948, p. 8, and Winston Churchill, *The Unrelenting Struggle*, (Boston, 1942), pp. 172-173, 192-193. Published in Munich, Germany, *Borba* is the organ of the leading neo-Vlasovite organization, the Fighting Union for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia. (SBONR). This group has announced its backing of the democratic-republican Russian League for Popular Freedom, founded in New York in March, 1949. Cf. George Fischer, "The Soviet 'Non-Returners,'" *New Republic*, June 13, 1949, p. 14, and *Gryadushchaya Rossiya*, bulletin of the Russian League for Popular Freedom, edited by Alexander Kerensky, May 8, 1949, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup>V. Osokin, *Andrei Andreevich Vlasov, Kratkaya Biografiya* (Andrei Andreevich Vlasov, A Brief Biography). Izdatelstvo Shkoly Propagandistov Russkoi Osoboditelnoi Armii (Publishing House of the Propagandists' School of the Russian Liberation Army, (Dabendorf, b/Berlin), 1944. A note on the inside back cover, typical of Soviet publications, states that the above was published in 3000 copies, in the month of August.

## II

It is the unknown Russian soldier, who voluntarily rose in arms against Bolshevism, and who in this armed struggle finally decided to give vent to the hatred which for twenty-five years had been accumulating against the bloody Stalin régime, that laid the foundation of the Russian Liberation Movement.

It arose spontaneously; spontaneously because it ripened at the bottom, because it was the natural answer of the people to the whole policy of Bolshevism. Force can be opposed only by force. Many understood this, and as soon as an opportunity presented itself, millions of Russian people, knowingly withdrawing from the war, surrendered as prisoners, and hundreds of thousands enrolled as volunteers to fight against Bolshevism. But this was only the first stage.

To strengthen and furnish a foundation to this spontaneously-arisen movement, it was essential to cement it ideologically, to give it a banner. The second stage had to be entered upon.

Against Bolshevism, but for what? Against collective farms, but for the landlords? Against the inhuman penal system of Bolshevik state capitalism, but for the factory owners? A more or less precise answer to such questions had to be given; the outlines of the coming New Russia had to be sketched. On December 27, 1942, Lieutenant General Andrei A. Vlasov issued an appeal, in which he clearly defined the aims and problems of the struggle of Russian men and women against Bolshevism.

From this moment on, the name of General Vlasov was indisso-  
lably linked to the Russian Liberation Movement. Any movement, of whatever size or in whatever field it may originate—be it in the field of politics, art, or technology—is always connected with a name or with several names. These names always carry the masses along with them, become banners for them. And such the name of Vlasov became, signifying that the Russian Liberation Movement had become stronger, that it had become an ideologically integrated, a purposeful, movement.

In the complicated and confused political situation of today, millions of Russians who find themselves on this side of the front have discovered a name with which they can identify their fate, their hopes for the future. To define their position, these people say: "I am a Vlasovite." Vlasovite—this one word enables them to speak to each other freely.

Disputes flare up around the name of Vlasov. Soviet propaganda

by all possible means strives to blacken his name, tries to stamp it with the infamous stigma of traitor, and labels him German spy and hireling. In the Red Army, lectures are given on the subject: "General Vlasov—traitor to the Motherland." On this side of the front rumors circulate among Russians in labor camps, in volunteer units, in service units of the German Army, often clumsy, often provocative, often contradictory. It is said that Vlasov is a stooge for Stalin, that ROA is a Bolshevik Fifth Column, that Vlasov has long ago flown to Moscow, that he has been killed by Bolshevik agents;—and finally, that Vlasov is the person on whom God has laid the task of saving the Russian people from Bolshevism, and that services are being held secretly in Russian churches for the preservation of Vlasov's life and victory for his cause.

Who, then, is Vlasov? How does it happen that a former Soviet general has entered upon the path of open struggle against Bolshevism and become the leader of this struggle?

Andrei Andreevich Vlasov was born on September 1, 1900, in the family of a peasant of the village Lomakino in the Nizhni Novgorod province. His grandfather was a serf. Vlasov's father strove to give his children an education.

"Learning is not something to carry on your back—it's real wealth, to be made use of," he was fond of saying.

As soon as the eldest son Ivan grew up, his father enrolled him in school, and afterwards sent him to a teachers seminary in Nizhni Novgorod. This, however, was a strain on the household's limited means. The family increased in number (Andrei was the youngest, the thirteenth child), and the tailoring handicraft, by which the father sought to improve his financial status, failed to alleviate the situation. Andrei was able to enter school, and later a theological seminary only because his brother Ivan provided for him. Upon completing his course at the seminary, Ivan had become the first village teacher of peasant origin in a district of 300 kilometers radius. With the aid of Ivan, Andrei completed school and the theological seminary, but he still had to pursue his studies on a scanty subsistence, living a hand-to-mouth existence in a corner which he rented from the family of a cabby, on the outskirts of Nizhni Novgorod. While enrolled in the upper classes at the seminary Andrei started to earn money by giving lessons, tutoring children of petty officials and the poorer merchants.

The February revolution and the October coup d'état found Vlasov a student in the fourth year of the theological seminary.



Like the overwhelming majority of the people, he at that time did not envisage clearly the platform and program of the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks promised peace, land, freedom; they promised to abolish the obstacles to education; they brought with them the destruction of caste distinctions, of class rigidity which had made Andrei suffer so much in school and in the seminary. Could one say that program was bad?

In 1918, Vlasov entered the first-year course of the Agricultural school of the Nizhni Novgorod University. But the times were not right for studying. The young Soviet Republic was living through difficult days. In the East, the army of Kolchak had captured Perm and threatened Viatka; in the South, the Volunteer Army had surrounded Tsaritsyn, aiming to cut off wheat and oil from Red Moscow; in the West, Yudenich was gathering forces; in the North, the British were landing. Inside the country surrounded on all sides, reigned the policy of War Communism. Everything was concentrated in the hands of the state. Without permission from the government it was impossible to get housing and it was unthinkable to travel by railroad. In the villages, the food requisitioning detachments were carrying on, taking from the peasants bread which they paid for with worthless currency. On the roads, road-block detachments were catching smugglers and speculators. The last economic resources were being used, the last human reserves were being mobilized.

In the spring of 1919, Andrei Vlasov was drafted into the 27th Infantry Volga Regiment, but he did not stay there long. In a few weeks he was sent from the regiment to the first officers' school of the Red Army. The course was short. In four months Vlasov was sent to the Southern front as a lieutenant.

In this period the army of Denikin, having suffered a decisive defeat near Orel and Voronezh, in the latter part of October, 1919, was rapidly rolling back South. The headquarters of the Southern front, located at that time in Kharkov, sent Vlasov to one of the regiments of the 2nd Don Division, which had participated in the operations on the rivers Don and Manych. Here, under combat conditions, Andrei A. Vlasov carried out in practice his military knowledge. There also he found the way to the Russian soldier's heart: a warm, tender word towards a subordinate, concern about his living quarters, food, and clothing, the desire to give the soldier even the smallest pleasure, but along with this—the severest requirements and harshness towards those who showed even the

least neglect and carelessness towards duty. This method always made Vlasov the favorite commanding officer, and the unit which he commanded—the most exemplary unit.

Early in 1920, the whole of the Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus were cleared of the White Army, but clouds hung again over the young Soviet Republic. In the Crimea, Wrangel was gathering strength, in the West, Poland began military actions. The 2nd Don Division was transferred to the Northern Caucasus, to the Wrangel front.

At this time, Vlasov was already a company commander, but he did not stay long on this assignment. In a few months he was transferred to the headquarters of the division and became Deputy Chief of Staff for operations.

This work was not to the liking of the young, energetic officer. After some time, he found himself in charge of the cavalry and infantry reconnaissance of one of the division's regiments.

In November, 1920, the Red Army conquered the Crimea. The liquidation of the Wrangel front ended for Vlasov the period of combat action in the Civil War. It is true that in the Ukraine armed groups of bandits continued to exist and operate together until 1922. Action against them had an episodic character and was carried out by separate detachments. Vlasov was commander of one of these detachments, fighting the bands of Makhno.

During the Civil War, Andrei A. Vlasov had devoted all his energy and strength to the struggle against the White movement. In that period he deeply believed that the Bolsheviks were bringing happiness, freedom, and bread to the Russian people, and that the Soviet government would give Russia advanced legislation and universal education. It is true that rumors were reaching him of the Kronstadt rebellion, of the unrest among peasants opposing the policy of War Communism, of the terror of the Cheka, but nevertheless, at that time he found justification for the policy. It seemed to him that the country was waging a cruel war, that all means had to be used to achieve victory, that rigid authority must be maintained, and that afterwards everything would be settled more to everyone's liking.

In the period from 1921 to 1923, the Red Army shrunk from 6,000,000 to 600,000. Officers were demoted from the command of the regiments to command of companies, divisions were reduced to regiments, and regiments to battalions. Vlasov, who, by this time,



had come to love the military profession dearly, decided to devote all his life to it. He was named a company commander.

Under Andrei A. Vlasov's leadership his company soon became outstanding. The Chief of Staff of the Red Army, Pavel P. Lebedev, while inspecting the North-Caucasian military district and attending parade practice, personally thanked Vlasov for the excellent training he had given his men.

Soon thereafter, Vlasov, on the day of the fifth anniversary of the Red Army, received an inscribed silver watch, and in 1924 was named commanding officer of the regimental school of the 26th Infantry Regiment. He remained at this post for four years. In 1928, he was sent to Moscow to the Advanced School of Infantry Tactics, for Red Army officers' training. In 1929, after completion of the course, he again returned to the regiment, in the capacity of battalion commander. In 1930, he left his regiment and took up duties as tactical instructor in the Leningrad Refresher School for Red Army officers.

In 1930 Vlasov also joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In the same year he was appointed to the Advanced School for Military Schools' Instructors, organized by the Central Administration of Military Training Establishments. The method of teaching tactics used by Vlasov at the Advanced School was highly appreciated by the director of the training establishments of the Red Army, Kazansky. Having returned with commendations to Leningrad, he again took up his work in the School as deputy to the director of the training section. Soon, however, he was transferred to the mobilization department of the Headquarters of the Leningrad military district. Here he remained until 1933.

But this work did not satisfy Vlasov. He still felt drawn to the line units, to more active work with people. In 1935, he was transferred to the post of deputy director for combat training in the Leningrad military district. To him this work was much more interesting. While inspecting the district together with the Deputy Commander of the Leningrad military district, General Primakov, they discovered that the 11th Infantry Regiment of the 4th Turkestan Division had been very inadequately trained. The commanding general, to straighten out the combat schooling of the regiment, named Vlasov as regimental commander. After the regiment was brought into top shape, Vlasov was given command of the 137th Infantry Regiment, which soon occupied the first place in the Kiev

military district. Following this, Vlasov was named Deputy Commander of the 73rd Division.

In 1938, Timoshenko, at the time commanding the Kiev military district, drew Colonel Vlasov into work in the headquarters of the district. Vlasov became the director of the department of combat training. But he worked only briefly on this assignment. In the fall of 1938, he was called to Moscow and was appointed Chief of Staff to the military advisor in China, General Cherepanov.

The Soviet Union was following a dual policy in China. On the one hand, by supporting Chiang Kai-shek with arms, and sending its military instructors to his army, the Soviet Union strengthened the side fighting Japan and thereby its own position in the East. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, by supporting the Communist elements and by leaning on the Chinese Red Army (Chu-Teh and others), was kindling a struggle inside China, striving to sovietize it. The increasing threat on the part of Japan forced the Soviet government to alter somewhat its policy in China in the direction of increased military aid for Chiang Kai-shek. It was just in this period that Vlasov arrived in China.

The Chief of Staff of the military advisor had the task of lecturing to the commanding group of the Chinese army on the foundations of operational tactics. Andrei A. Vlasov carried out this task and some time afterwards was assigned the extremely responsible position of military advisor to General Yen Hsi-shan.

About this general, who was governor (in fact the unlimited ruler) of two gigantic provinces in Northern China, Shansi and Suiyuan, there was a saying in China: "Nobody can count money in China like Yen Hsi-shan." Sly, calculating, a subtle diplomat, Yen Hsi-shan, having formally recognized the supremacy of Chiang Kai-shek, actually failed to carry out his orders, and, hiding out in the mountains, preserved his forces. Vlasov was given the difficult task of forcing Yen Hsi-shan to take part in the offensive which Chiang Kai-shek was at the time intending to undertake.

Vlasov spent four months with Yen Hsi-shan. Under incredibly difficult conditions, he confronted Yen Hsi-shan with the necessity of joining in the operations against the Japanese army. By using great diplomatic ingenuity and displaying all his effervescent energy, he obtained from Yen Hsi-shan permission to visit his regiments and divisions.

After the recall of General Cherepanov to Moscow, Andrei A. Vlasov performed the duties of chief military advisor to Chiang

Kai-shek. In November, 1939, after the arrival of the new advisor, General Kachanov, Vlasov was recalled to the Soviet Union. For his good work in forging together the Chinese army, Chiang Kai-shek decorated Vlasov with the Golden Order of the Dragon.

In this period the Soviet Union was living through tense days. The Bolsheviks made a sharp about-face in their foreign policy. After futile negotiations with the Anglo-French delegation, a treaty of friendship and non-aggression was concluded with National-Socialist Germany in August, 1939. The war in the West which began shortly after this created favorable conditions for increasing Bolshevik influence. The Bolsheviks threw off the mask of love of peace, and showed their true face—the face of Red Imperialism. Making use of the fact that the Polish army actually ceased to exist after the decisive blow inflicted on it by Germany, the Soviet Union occupied the Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia. After this began the “working over” of the Baltics, and the conflict with Finland ripened.

The Soviet Union had to enter the war. But not all was well with the Red Army. The Yezhov purges (*Yezhovshchina*), which rolled over the land, had a detrimental impact on the army, hitting hardest the highest commanding personnel. The Red Army was in effect beheaded.

Involuntarily, doubts crept in: were all these commanders really enemies of the people? Would all the gigantic efforts, the incredible deprivations which the Russian people had undergone and were undergoing prove to be for nothing—all because of the Stalin régime. . . Perhaps the grandiose international ideas, for the sake of which the Russian people were suffering, were not a necessity to them?

The Russian people had sacrificed much, very much, and from this Andrei A. Vlasov drew the following conclusion: whether these international ideas would prove themselves lasting or not, the Russian people would live on and must be strong. Therefore, the Motherland must prepare to the utmost for the impending war, and then the Russian people could take a vote of their own. With this in mind, Vlasov went all out in the work of strengthening the organization and combat training of the Red Army.

In December, 1939, Vlasov was named commander of the 99th Infantry Division. This was a frontier division (in the Peremyshl area) and was therefore rapidly brought up to war-time strength. The composition of the division was not homogeneous; suffice it to

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say that it contained representatives of 44 nationalities. It was difficult to fuse these elements, but under the guidance of Vlasov the division soon improved its fighting qualities sharply. This was aided strongly by the fact that after the pitiful experience of the Finnish war, the Red Army introduced a number of measures, aiming to increase discipline and to strengthen the authority of the commander. In all his long years of service in the Red Army, Vlasov was for the first time in sole charge of a unit.

Familiarizing the soldiers and officers of his division with combat conditions, Vlasov undertook numerous marches with the division, and in all weather conditions carried out firing exercises after the marches.

In the fall of 1940, inspections of divisions were made in military districts throughout the Soviet Union to determine the best trained division of the Red Army. The 99th Infantry Division was recognized as the best in the Kiev military district. The People's Commissar of Defense, Marshal Timoshenko, who was in the district at the time, after getting acquainted with the combat training of the 99th Division, found that this division was also the best in the whole Red Army. The division was awarded simultaneously three challenge banners of the Red Army: the banner for the best infantry regiment, the banner for the best artillery regiment, and the banner for the best division as a whole. Vlasov himself was decorated with an inscribed gold watch by the Timoshenko, and with the Order of Lenin by the government.

In December, 1940, Vlasov was called to Moscow. The General Staff of the Red Army had called a meeting of the highest commanding personnel, at which meeting General Meretskov, at the time Chief of the General Staff, was to present a report on the tasks for the coming year in the army's combat training. Andrei A. Vlasov was to report along with Meretskov. He was to tell of his experiences in the combat training of his division, the best in the Red Army. In his report he made an appeal to rear the soldiers in the spirit of Suvorov, pointing out that it was essential to make use of the age-old experience of the Russian army, while taking into consideration contemporary developments.

In January, 1941, Vlasov was named commander of the 4th Tank Corps (Lwow). By this time it was absolutely clear that the coming war would be, to a large extent, a war of tanks. Despite the fact that the Soviet Union had been the first country to introduce major tank detachments into its army, the Red Army at this time found

itself lagging in this field. (This was due to the fact that General Kulik, upon returning from Spain, had been able to convince Voroshilov, and through him Stalin, of the uselessness of large tank detachments, and these had been disbanded.) The experience of the fighting in Poland, and later in France, proved the importance of large tank detachments, and their reestablishment in the Red Army was begun at high speed.

The war found Vlasov commander of the 4th Tank Corps. On the first days of the war it became clear that the Red Army was not prepared, despite the fact that it readied itself for war for twenty-three years.

Vlasov's corps on the Ukrainian front received the first blows of the enemy. It was soon greatly weakened, however. By order of the front commander, General Kirponos, Corps Commissar Vashugin, a member of the War Council, removed from the corps one and a half tank divisions, intending with this group to strike a counter-blow. Owing, however, to his incompetent leadership the tank group wandered into a swamp, where all tanks had to be abandoned. Vashugin shot himself.

Vlasov with the remnants of his corps, under the blows of the mailed fists of German armoured-tank units, fought his way out of encirclement to Berdichev. The corps was in a very poor condition. There was a shortage of fuel, there were no spare parts, and as a result expensive tanks had to be left behind due to minor disrepair. On the 16th of July, Vlasov with the remnants of his corps reached Berdichev, having by this time fought up to twenty heavy battles with the enemy's first-class forces.

On the 17th of July, Budenny called Vlasov to Kiev. Vlasov was given the assignment of commanding the 37th Army and the Kiev fortified area, as well as the garrison. In conditions of total disorder and demoralization, Andrei A. Vlasov defended Kiev during August and September. Only after Kiev found itself in a solid encirclement, out of which there was little hope to escape, Vlasov sent a radiogram to the Kremlin, pointing out the uselessness of further defense. From Stalin he received the order to withdraw.

The retreat was a difficult one. For 550 kilometers, all the way to Kursk, they battled through the encirclement. In Voronezh, Vlasov was received by the commander of the South-West sector, Marshal Timoshenko, and by Khrushchev, member of the War Council. He was named deputy service chief of the South-West sector. In this work he came face to face with the chaos and disorder reigning be-



hind the front. There was no army clothing, there was a shortage of ammunition and of vehicles. . . . And all this after one of the richest countries in the world had for twenty-four years prepared for the war, after 170 million people worked only for defense during that time. Whose fault was this? . . . In Vlasov's mind the answer gradually ripened, terrible in its certitude: the Bolshevik régime alone was to blame. . .

In November, 1941, Vlasov was called back to Moscow. There was panic in the capital: factories and organizations were being evacuated, old men and students were hurriedly herded together to dig trenches and anti-tank ditches. Under such conditions Vlasov was faced with the difficult task of forming the 20th Army and defending Moscow. With his army Vlasov was able to stop the enemy and push him back from the approaches of Moscow to Rzhev. For this operation he was decorated by the Soviet government with the Order of the Red Banner and promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General.

In March, 1942, Vlasov was named deputy commander of the Volkhov front. General Meretskov was commanding the front.

A shock army had been created for the liberation of encircled and starving Leningrad, but this army was itself soon surrounded and cut off from the rest of the front. For the alleviation of the resulting difficult situation, Vlasov flew to the surrounded army in an airplane. Assuming command of the army from General Klykov, he was able to break the German ring and form a narrow corridor (three kilometers in width), connecting the army with the rest of the front. But he lacked the forces to widen the breach and to evacuate the army. General Meretskov did not come to the rescue. . . The corridor was again cut off, and the ring around the besieged army tightened even more.

Vlasov saw that the hungry army (Red Army men were receiving 50 grams of bread a day), encircled in forests and swamps, was doomed to perish. Here, among the starving Red Army men, who were rotting alive in the swamps, the same question which had agitated him before came to him with particular sharpness: what for? . . . Why were Russian people perishing?

If in the first days of the war it was still possible to explain the panic and disorder in the army by the unexpectedness of the military blow, one thing was now perfectly clear to Vlasov: the Russian people did not want to fight and die for Stalin and Bolshevism. For the first time in their history the Russian people surrendered into

captivity and deserted *en masse*, using any trick to remain in the areas occupied by the German army.

Thus the people voted for the Soviet régime. . .

During all his earlier work in the Red Army, Vlasov did not separate himself from the interests of the people. In the Civil War he defended the Bolsheviks because he believed that they would give the people a happy life; in peace time he actively helped to build and fortify the Red Army because he believed that the only country with a Dictatorship of the Proletariat needed a strong army, needed a force able to defend its gigantic, unprecedented construction.

But now to continue his previous work meant to go against the interests of the people. Fighting under such conditions became useless, unnecessary, even harmful. . .

Andrei A. Vlasov together with the remnants of his army was captured. . .

Many ideas were thought over in captivity, many received a different evaluation, and the conviction that Bolshevism was the worst enemy of the Russian people, that it must be torn out by the roots from the soil of Russia became hardened and crystallized. If Bolshevism dies—then the Russian people will live, if Bolshevism survives—then the Russian people will die out, will cease to exist. Either—or. . . . There was no third choice. . . .

Many ordinary Russians had already begun an armed struggle against Bolshevism. They were pointing the way, they were setting an example. . . .

In December, 1942, Andrei Andreevich Vlasov placed himself at the head of the Russian Committee, organized by him, and thereby became the head of the spontaneously-conceived Russian Liberation Movement.

Around Andrei A. Vlasov Russian patriots are drawing together, people who have set as their life's aim the destruction of Bolshevism and the creation of a new free Russia. The process of gathering strength is taking place, and cadres are assembling.

The time will come when the Russian Liberation Army, thoroughly prepared, will strike a blow at Stalin, at Bolshevism. And this blow will be supported by the multimillion masses of the Russian people on the other side of the front.

The Bolshevik period was a bloody dead-end in the history of Russia. The Russian people in huge numbers have already under-



stood this. But they do not desire a return to the past, they want to complete the people's revolution begun in 1917.

Against Bolshevism, but not for the old régime, not for the re-establishment of autocracy, but for the New Russia.

For a Russia without Bolsheviks and capitalists!

To the peasants—liberation from the *Kolkhoz* slavery!

To the workers—a normal working day and an income guaranteeing not only a minimum living wage, but also the satisfaction of the cultural demands of modern man!

To the intelligentsia—freedom of creative endeavor!

To the peoples of Russia—the freedom of developing their national cultures, and self-determination!

To yourself, your family, and your Motherland, freedom of labor and creative effort!

. . . . Such is the will of the people.

The Russian Liberation Movement expresses this will. That is why, repeating the words of Andrei Andreevich Vlasov, we say:

"Russia is ours!

Russia's past is ours!

Russia's future is ours!"

# Moscow, The Stalingrad of 1812:

## American Reaction Toward Napoleon's Retreat From Russia\*

BY WILLIAM E. NAGENGAST

A COMPARISON of America's attitude toward Russia during World War II and during the War of 1812 reveals a striking parallel. In both wars Russia defended herself against foreign dictators whose success would have resulted in their complete conquest of continental Europe. The unsuccessful Nazi siege of Stalingrad in 1942 and the disastrous French retreat from Moscow became associated in the American mind with all-out resistance to aggressive militarism and dictatorship. In both wars Americans hailed Russia as this nation's "first line of defense" against the two most formidable military machines of their day. To many Americans the ideology of the Russian government in both wars counted for little when the fate of Europe and the world rested on that people's determination to ravage their homes rather than surrender to a foreign power.

Although the rôles of France and the German states were reversed, the chief difference between the two wars was the part played by the United States. In the earlier conflict, this nation was the enemy of England; in the latter, an ally. In 1812 at almost the same time that Tsar Alexander I joined forces with England to combat Napoleon, the United States went to war against Great Britain. Russia was thus placed in the dilemma that regardless of the victor in the Anglo-American conflict, the Tsar faced either the danger of losing the aid of his ally, England, or the possibility that the United States would join Napoleon, his enemy. Peace between England and the United States was also greatly desired by Alexander in order to continue the American carrying trade with Russia. England, likewise, would be more fully able to aid his war on Napoleon by not detracting from British forces employed against France. Accordingly, early in the conflict, he volunteered his offices to restore peace between Britain and the United States.

\*This article is based on a portion of the author's doctoral dissertation, *Russia Through American Eyes, 1781-1871* [Ed.].

While the Tsarist offer of mediation was a topic that figured in American foreign affairs, its significance was overshadowed by the news that reached the United States in the early months of 1813 of the failure of Napoleon's winter campaign in Russia and his disastrous retreat from Moscow. Already in December of the previous year, the *New York Evening Post*, a leading journal of the Federalist party, upon receiving the news of the burning of Moscow, then generally accepted as a French triumph, had wishfully but accurately predicted:

We have conversed with an intelligent gentleman who resided a long time in Russia, and about seven years of the time in the city of Moscow. He informs us that the weather in that country is generally pleasant till after the first of October, when the frost sets in, and excessive storms of rain and sleet are experienced, and continue with very little intermission until about the middle of December. All the time the roads are so overwhelmed with water and ice, that traveling is extremely uncomfortable, and many times impracticable. After the middle of December the snows begin to fall in such quantities that all traveling is entirely at an end; and the usual communication from town to town is interrupted for several weeks, the snows sometimes falling to the depth of eight or ten feet. He thinks, if Bonaparte did not commence his retreat from Moscow by the middle of October, that he will be obliged to winter there; for after that time it will be impossible for him to get out of Russia. . . . If he is obliged to winter there, the Russians have nothing to do but to cut off his supplies until about the middle of December, after which time all travel ceases until spring, and the great army of the north will be annihilated.

Indeed, it is plain from all the accounts we can collect from . . . the French papers . . . that the Russians have nothing to do but to hold out this winter, and their country will be relieved from its invaders. That they are determined to persevere appears to be certain; the destruction of such a city as Moscow is a proof of that determination, and a sure pledge that they will never surrender while they can hold a foot of ground.<sup>1</sup>

To the members of the American Federalist party who apprehensively viewed each step of the Corsican dictator's steady march toward world conquest, the calamitous retreat of Napoleon from Russia signified the preservation of liberty and freedom. The great fear of these Americans was a French triumph over Russia. In their minds such a catastrophe would have meant that Napoleon could assume the rôle of onlooker while the United States fought his

<sup>1</sup>December 12, 1812. The editor, William Coleman, a Hamiltonian, gushed over every disaster that befell the Napoleonic forces. Allan Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 59-60, 1922. Although Moscow was burned September 16-20, 1812, the news did not reach New York until December 12. Foreign news was usually about two months old when it appeared in American papers, though the time interval varied with the speed of the sailing vessel and accidents of the voyage.

battles by warring on England. These Federalists viewed the Tsarist forces as America's "first line of defense" against French aggression and dictatorship and they denounced the Madison Administration for stabbing England in the back at a time when Britain was struggling for her existence in a war against Napoleon. Their conviction that President Madison was a tool of Napoleon amounted to an obsession that shunned all reason and against which argument was useless. No man could thus have been more popular in New England, the stronghold of the Federalist party, than Alexis Eustaphieiev (Evstafiev), the Russian Consul at Boston.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, in the latter part of March, 1813, there appeared in the Boston papers a notice to the citizens to celebrate the downfall of France, "to unite in a grateful and national festival on this glorious and auspicious event, and to invite the Consul of his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, to participate with us on the joyous occasion."<sup>3</sup> In inviting Eustaphieiev, T. H. Perkins, the chairman of Boston's committee on arrangements, wrote: "It will not be forgotten, that it was you who made known to the American people *The Resources of Russia*,<sup>4</sup> nor, that what we now know as History, was prophetically announced by you, as the fate of the Despot [Napoleon], who vainly thought, that your countrymen might be added to the number of his vassals." "We rejoice with you," Perkins added, "that the oppressed and humiliated nations of the Continent of Europe are now bursting their shackles, and that your gallant Emperor is hailed as the Deliverer of the Commercial World."<sup>5</sup> The *Columbian Sentinel*<sup>6</sup> of Boston subsequently an-

<sup>2</sup>Leo Wiener, "The First Russian Consul at Boston," *The Russian Review*, 1, #3 (1916) pp. 131-140 is an excellent sketch of Eustaphieiev's activities in the United States.

<sup>3</sup>*Boston Advertiser and Repertory*, March 25, 1813.

<sup>4</sup>This work, written by Eustaphieiev, appeared in May, 1812, predicting a calamitous defeat for Napoleon if he attempted to invade Russia. The book's popularity is attested by the fact that it was reprinted three times in the United States. Eustaphieiev added an appendix to the second edition to bring the account up to date. The full title is: *The Resources of Russia, in the Event of a War With France, and an Examination of the Prevailing Opinion Relative to the Military and Political Conduct of the Court of St. Petersburg, with a Short Description of the Cozaks*. Boston, Munroe and Francis. 1812.

<sup>5</sup>T. H. Perkins' letter to Eustaphieiev of March 18, 1813. Published in the pamphlet, *Sketch of the Church Solemnities At The Stone Chapel and Festival At The Exchange, Thursday, March 25, 1813, in Honour of the Russian Achievements Over Their French Invaders*. Boston, Munroe and Francis. March 1813.

<sup>6</sup>March 27, 1813.

nounced further details. It stated that "a great number of the inhabitants of Boston associated for the purpose of solemnizing the glorious and important events which the Almighty has vouchsafed to bring to pass in Russia." A selected "committee of arrangements," consisting of "the most respectable citizens," designated March 25th for what was described as a "solemn and important festival." Tsarist Russia had won the plaudits of Bostonians.

Eustaphieve, the Russian, accepted the invitation to attend Boston's celebration.<sup>7</sup> An Oratorio was prepared in King's Chapel. The solemnities consisted of "airs, a recitative, and choruses of nearly two hundred amateurs." Noted musicians, among them Hewitt and Gottlieb Graupner, furnished the instrumental music; the Rev. Dr. Channing offered up a solemn prayer, and Dr. Freeman so selected his Scripture readings that "they fully rendered the course of the political events in Europe."<sup>8</sup> Two thousand people attended the chapel services and at four o'clock the gathering assembled for a banquet at the Exchange Coffee House. The Hon. Harrison G. Otis presided, assisted by Dr. John Warren, Peter Osgood, and Samuel G. Perkins as Vice Presidents. The roll call of the participants included the names of all important Massachusetts Federalists. Among the invited guests were the Hon. Messrs. Pickering, Lloyd, and Quincy, the President of Harvard, the Judges of the state Supreme Judicial Court; the Hon. Generals Cobb, Heath, and Brooks; the Selectmen of Boston; and the State Secretary and Treasurer.<sup>9</sup> The hall was appropriately decorated "with great taste." When "The Emperor of Russia" was given as a toast, a curtain was drawn disclosing a transparent likeness of Alexander

<sup>7</sup>A complete description of Boston's Russian Victory Celebration is contained in the April 2, 1813 issue of the *Weekly Messenger* of that city.

The description of this celebration is taken from the pamphlet published in Boston in 1813 commemorating the event, *op. cit.*, and also from *A Discourse on The Russian Victories, Given in King's Chapel, March 23, 1813. By the Rev. James Freeman, D. D. and a Catalogue of the Library given by King William II to King's Chapel in 1698. With Introductory Remarks by Henry Wilder Foote*. Reprinted from the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, March and May, 1881. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>8</sup>The *Columbian Sentinel* of March 27, 1813 described the Rev. Channing's prayer: "For the liberated it offered up our fervent thanks, and even for the vanquished invaders it manifested a charity well becoming an ambassador of the Prince of Peace."

<sup>9</sup>The Hon. Mr. Gore, General Heath and Judge Paine sent notes regretting that ill health prevented their attending, and "expressing their high gratification at the successes of the Russians in driving back the invaders of their homes and firesides." *Columbian Sentinel*, March 27, 1813.

in full uniform, with the motto: "Alexander—the Deliverer of Europe." Simultaneous with a toast in honor of Moscow, another transparency was unveiled, representing Moscow in flames, and from the flames the Russian eagle ascended bearing in his beak a scroll: "Moscow is not Russia." Amidst the decorations described as "tasteful and fanciful," the heroic commanders of the Tsarist armies were likewise honored. Enscrolled on the sides of the Emperor's picture were the names of the Russian Generals Kutuzov, Bagration, Benigsen, Sacken, Platov, and Miloradovich. The Hon. H. G. Otis delivered an address on what he termed "the Russian emancipation of Europe from thralldom and the rescue of America from danger." He concluded with the fervent declaration: "Alexander the Great, Emperor of All the Russias—He Weeps not for the Conquest of a New World, but Rejoices in the Salvation of the Old." Toasts were offered to American statesmen, the Russian armies, and the Russian nation, followed by a Russian ode. After what was termed "many more toasts and more odes," the Russian Consul, guest of honor, was requested to speak. Eustaphieve, finding it "fearful that he should not be able to deliver himself in a foreign language with sufficient distinctness," requested Otis, the presiding official, to read his address. The speech consisted of a defense of his native government from charges of aggression. The Tsarist Consul declared that Russian wars in the past "never proceeded from caprice" and asserted that to his fellow subjects, "peace is a blessing, devoutly to be wished, incessantly pursued, and preferred to all other means of aggrandizement." "The greater is the influence of Russia," explained Eustaphieve, "the greater will be the security and happiness of nations." The Russian ended in a sentimental adulation of Bostonians and well wishes for the capital of Massachusetts: "May it ever in politics and morals be the leading star in America!" Boston's reply was equally fervid: "The Russian Consul, the Gentleman and the Scholar,—the ornament of his own country and the friend of ours."<sup>10</sup>

The enthusiasm of American Federalists was not limited to New England. On April 7, concurrent with the arrival at the nation's capital of the news of Boston's celebration of the Russian victories, the Federalist journal, *The Federal Republican and Commercial Gazette* of nearby Georgetown, D. C., a publication so hostile to the war that the previous year the editor's home and printshop had been

<sup>10</sup>The complete speeches of Harrison G. Otis and Eustaphieve appear on the front page of the *Baltimore Weekly Register* IV, #6, (April 10, 1813) 89-91.



stormed and wrecked by a Baltimore mob, ran the following advertisement:

### CELEBRATION

All gentlemen in the neighborhood who wish to unite in celebrating the RUSSIAN VICTORIES, the expulsion and precipitate flight of Napoleon from the last independent nation on the continent; the deliverance of these United States and of mankind at large, from threatened bondage and the greatest afflictions that ever tortured humanity, are requested to send in their names immediately to the Bar of the Union Tavern. . . .<sup>11</sup>

The announcement ended with the explanation that appropriate accompaniments would be provided and a date announced in a forth-coming issue. Two weeks later the *Gazette* proclaimed June 5th the day set aside for the Georgetown Russian victory celebration. This late date, it explained, was due to "the ample time it will afford to make preparations corresponding with the grandeur and solemnity of the occasion" and, by not conflicting with the session of Congress, would enable Congressmen to attend. The following issue informed its readers that the committee on arrangements consisted of Mayor John Peter, Robert Beverly, William Marbury, Thomas Peter, Francis Didge, John S. Stull, Washington Bowie, and John Lee.

Georgetown's celebration<sup>12</sup> followed the pattern of Boston's demonstration held three months before. The first portion of the exercises was performed at the Rev. Mr. Balch's church of Georgetown in the presence of what was termed "a large and brilliant assembly of ladies and gentlemen," among whom were members of Congress<sup>13</sup> and the Maryland legislature. At half past two, Dashkov, the Russian Minister, accompanied by his Lady, and the Counselor of Legation and Secretary, arrived at the church in the Minister's carriage of state. The Rev. Balch offered up a prayer followed by

<sup>11</sup>April 7, 1813. This same issue devoted all of page one and 4/5 of page two to a detailed account of Boston's Russian celebration. This same ad was repeated in this paper and also appeared in the April 20, 1813 issue of the *Washington National Intelligencer*.

<sup>12</sup>The following account of the Georgetown celebration is taken from *The Federal Republican*, June 7 and 9, 1813. A pamphlet of the Georgetown festival appears also to have been published, as the June 25, 1813 issue of this paper stated: "At the office of the Spirit of '76 the pamphlet containing an account of the RUSSIAN CELEBRATION will be published this day."

<sup>13</sup>The *Federal Republican and Commercial Gazette* of June 7 reported that "most of the minority of Congress" attended this event.

music. Mr. Custis of Arlington<sup>14</sup> paid the main honors of the occasion. After painting a dismal picture of the Napoleonic victories over the various countries of Europe, "spreading ruin and desolation around him," the Arlingtonian asserted that "in the flames of Moscow" the French dictator found "a funeral pyre for his ambitions." Custis waxed eloquent in his praise of the Russian defenders and mocked American critics of Russia: "And are these the people whom the world has been pleased to denominate *Barbarians*?" "True—the sun of science hath as yet but feebly twinkled in their frozen clime," Custis admitted, "but by Heaven, this late act of theirs would have done honor to the most splendid area of ancient virtue. . ."<sup>15</sup>

At four o'clock the scene was closed with prayer. The guests, "to the tune of a Russian march," repaired to dinner at the Union Hotel. The Honorable Thomas Simm Lee, former governor of Maryland, presided, assisted by Vice Presidents Benjamin Stoddert, General Walter Smith, John C. Herbert, speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, and George Deneale of Alexandria. Attending guests included "the Heads of Department of the general government," Captain Stewart of the Navy, Captain Morris and officers of the frigate *Adams*.<sup>16</sup> At the upper end of the dining room stood a portrait and bust of the Emperor Alexander, furnished by Dashkov. It was surmounted by a large "emblematic picture," drawn by Custis, of a huge serpent in the talons of a black eagle of enormous size, hovering in front of a replica of burning Moscow and the tomb of Bagration, the Russian general whose fame was increased by his untimely death. Opposite the portrait of Alexander was placed that of George Washington. After the dinner was removed, President Lee opened a succession of toasts that included: "*Moscow in Flames*, a holy conflagration, that lights the nations of the earth to independence and peace"; "*Field Marshal Koutousoff*" to whom "age gave experience, experience begat prudence, nature gave valor and victory fame"; "*General Bagration*—the hero who nobly fell on the plains of Boro-

<sup>14</sup>Custis subsequently received a medal of Tsar Alexander I through the Russian Minister. His letter of thanks and subsequent correspondence with Dashkov was published in this Georgetown paper. (June 16, 1813). The complete text of the Custis speech appears in the *Federal Republican* of June 11, 1813.

<sup>15</sup>*Federal Republican*, June 11, 1813.

<sup>16</sup>According to the report of the *Federal Republican*, ex-Governor Thomas Johnson and Charles Carrollton had also been invited, but had written letters of regret of their inability to attend.

dino, defending his country, and her glorious cause"; and "*The Armies of Russia*,—Discipline exact, steadfast in loyalty, bravery a birth right, and conquest a heritage." Russia had indeed captured the hearts of these Maryland Federalists.

Robert Goodloe Harper, the son-in-law of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, an outstanding leader of the Baltimore Federalists, was the main speaker of the day. Opening with a toast to "Alexander The Deliverer," he presented an elaborate account of the invasion of Napoleon attributing its failure to the military skill of the Russians as well as to the severity of the winter. He assured the United States that "the Russian victories afford us the best if not the only hope of peace; the best if not the only chance of escape from the toils of French alliance, and the consequent horrors of French domination." Like Harrison G. Otis of Boston, Harper viewed Russia as America's first line of defense, pointing out that a French victory over Russia, coupled with the United States' declaration of war on England, would have resulted in a Napoleonic defeat of Britain. After such an event the Corsican might have attacked and conquered the United States. It was Russia who thwarted such a catastrophe. In a speech, which a reporter described as "frequently interrupted by bursts of applause, and the conclusion marked by long protracted expressions of approbation, equal to which we never before witnessed," Harper enthusiastically ended his Russian eulogy:

Our hope, therefore, the sheet anchor of our safety, is in the final triumph of Russia; of which her victories already achieved have laid the ground work, and afford a happy, almost a sure, presage. Shall we not then rejoice in these victories, with a joy great in proportion to the deliverance of which they are the foretaste and forerunners? Shall we not express with delightful enthusiasm, our admiration and gratitude toward him [Alexander], to whose magnanimity, constancy and power we, our children, and our children's children, in common with so many other nations, are to be indebted for this greatest of blessings? His victories are not for himself alone, nor for his own nation—they are achieved in the cause of humanity and of civil society; even in the cause of France herself, that estimable and unfortunate nation, which is made to suffer unheard of misery, in the attempts of her tyrant to rivet chains on the rest of the world; and whose deliverance from the iron yoke under which she writhes and groans, can be expected from no other quarter. . . .

To Alexander of Russia we owe it, under God, that we have this cause of rejoicing, and the liberty to rejoice. To him we are indebted for the deliverance already accomplished, and for the hope of good things yet to come. To him we owe it, that without sinning against the dearest hopes of humanity and our country, we may indulge our national pride and exultation in the brilliant achievements of our gallant little navy, the noble remnant of Washington; and that enlightened patriotism does not compel us to grieve over our own

victories, which but for those achieved by the arms of Alexander, would be but so many steps towards our own ruin. Let us then, as far as depends on us, bestow on him the most glorious title that mortal man has ever received, the most glorious title that mortal man has ever deserved—Let us drink to the health of

#### ALEXANDER THE DELIVERER.<sup>17</sup>

However, as in World War II, not all Americans were of one mind regarding the Russian victories. The anomaly of the festivals was soon apparent, inasmuch as Federalists were celebrating the good fortune of their enemy's ally. Russia at this time was the partner of England, America's antagonist, and the ill-fated French expedition to Moscow actually benefited Britain, the declared opponent of the young republic. So-called "loyal citizens" of the United States pointed out that to celebrate Russian victories was, in effect, to celebrate the victories of the enemy. Republican organs labeled the Russian festivals "un-American." The *National Intelligencer*<sup>18</sup> reminded its readers that Russia was the ally of Britain and that the celebrators of Tsarist victories "believed the success of Russia to be auspicious to the cause of our enemy." ". . . Let them [the Bostonians]," it pointed out, "instead of the 'Russian victories,' celebrate the Russian Mediation. . ."<sup>19</sup> This journal, the recognized organ of the Republican party, was severely critical of Massachusetts' Russian festival. It asserted that winter and not the Russian army deserved the credit for the defeated Napoleon.

We had really supposed that the farce, recently performed in Boston, had been too ridiculous, nay, too disgusting—for it seems it was not British enough with a Te Deum, and a mockery of religion by prostituting the Temple of God by singing Hallelujahs because two hundred thousand men, as they say, had been frozen, drowned, or starved to death in Russia. . .<sup>20</sup>

If one were to judge from the files of the *Intelligencer*, little enthusiasm for Russia's defeat of France existed in the capital of the United

<sup>17</sup>The complete text of Harper's speech appears in the *Federal Republican* of June 9, 1813 and was subsequently published by Robert Walsh in *Correspondence Respecting Russia, Between Robert Goodloe Harper, Esq. and Robert Walsh, Jun. Together With The Speech of Mr. Harper, Commemorative of The Russian Victories*. Philadelphia. 1813. pp. 26-27.

<sup>18</sup>The *National Intelligencer* of June 8, 1813 published a letter of Georgetown's Russian Festival by an "American Federalist" calling those who attended "un-American" inasmuch as there had been an American naval victory celebration at the same time.

<sup>19</sup>The *National Intelligencer*, April 24, 1813.

<sup>20</sup>The *National Intelligencer*, April 24, 1813.

States. This paper ridiculed Georgetown's postponement of the Russian festival to the distant month of June, and satirically stated that such delay was necessary to afford enough time "as a sufficient number of strangers can be collected to make up a decent number for a dinner. . . ." This journal, when informed of the membership of the arrangements committee, taunted that it was "surprised that a sufficient number would be found favoring it [the Russian celebration] to form a committee. . . ." If the citizens of Georgetown possessed a sympathy for Russia commensurate with their utterances, declared the *Intelligencer*, "Let them open a subscription for the relief of the unfortunate and miserable inhabitants of Moscow, deprived by fate of war of house, home, and sustenance." This Republican organ denounced the Federalist party as a despotic organization controlled from Boston by the Essex Junto, and one wherein the individual party member possessed no voice in government. Georgetown was thus to have a festival "because Boston had so decreed," and "if the party there were to celebrate the ravages of a pestilence in the East Indies, a celebration equally rational with that of the Russian victories, their copyists here would imitate them."<sup>21</sup>

In a day when newspapers were largely an appendage of politics and politics were conducted with intense scurrility, other Republican journals joined the attack on the American-Russian festivals. Such disapproval was largely due to hatred of England. The Anglophobia of the *Baltimore Patriot* overrode any enthusiasm this Republican newspaper felt for Napoleon's downfall. That journal viewed the Russian victory over France to be an English victory over Napoleon, and censured Federalists of Georgetown for their part in the Russian celebration. In a barbed attack on Robert Goodloe Harper, the Republican *Baltimore Patriot* poured forth its venom:

The ground taken by this politician is *avowedly British*. By that delusion which is so commonly practised, & perhaps has extended even to himself, he looks to England only for salvation; he views with horror the distant dangers of apprehended domination from her enemy, and loses sight of the direct injuries, insults and abuses which have pressed heavily and hardly on ourselves, from the very object of his devotion.<sup>22</sup>

The *Weekly Register* of the same city displayed a similar attitude toward American demonstrations in honor of Russia. The editor,

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, April 20, 1813.

<sup>22</sup>The *Baltimore Patriot*, cited in *National Intelligencer*, June 19, 1813.



Hezekiah Niles, an ardent and vociferous supporter of President Madison's administration, had contempt for those who adulated a country where "despotism was unmatched save by the low state of its civilization." He labeled all Russian enthusiasts in the category of Anglophiles. Niles observed:

Except at those *particular* times when *Russia* has been allied with *Great Britain*, it has been universally regarded as but one step removed from barbarism. This character, as it respects the mass of her population, is the testimony of all travellers whose works I have seen, and of the *English* especially; and of the *Cossacks*, every one speaks as of hordes of robbers, brave, it is true, but savage and unjust;—and, in their general manners, but little milder than some of the Indians of North America. These may be unpleasant expressions to those who, by splendid processions, long speeches and great feasts have celebrated the victories of this people, as tending to civilize the world and re-establish *order* and *law*, but are not the less just on that account.<sup>23</sup>

This Baltimore editor, while granting that Russia had "produced a few splendid characters" and that in some places, such as St. Petersburg, "society may be considered as enlightened and humane," declared that "the fact is indisputable, that the world cannot furnish a body of people more ignorant, more brutal, more slavish—I do not except even the inhabitants of *Africa*, the despised negro of the burning zone." Niles' hatred of despotism was apparent in his declaration that Russian serfdom was the destroyer of human liberty, and this institution had reduced the people to abject servility. "The people of *Russia* are slaves—miserable slaves," avowed Niles, "subject to the caprice of a master in all cases of person or property; even the females, married or single, being liable to the lusts of their lords!"<sup>24</sup>

The *Savannah Republican* likewise declared the Napoleonic débacle in Russia to be an English rather than an American celebration. This Southern journal believed it absurd for Anglophiles in the United States to celebrate Russia's good fortune. If, as the "American worshippers of England" believed, the British Navy served as "the safeguard of America from French invasion," why should English sympathizers here gush over the Tsar? Mockingly the *Savannah Republican* asked:

If England's Navy ever was our safeguard from French invasion, why care so much for the highly polished Russians? Bonaparte's conquering them could

<sup>23</sup>*Weekly Register* (April 30, 1814), VI, #9 p. 141. *Italics* Niles'. Article signed "Guthrie."

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*



not affect us, while we had so unfailing and *invincible* a protection in the form of a British Navy.<sup>25</sup>

Condemnation of celebration in honor of Russia came not only from Republican journals, but from the Federalist ranks as well. This latter party, already in eclipse because of its opposition to the war, was further rent by dissension due to divergent opinion regarding Russia. It was soon apparent that all Federalists were not of a like mind in their praise of a nation that stood in such sharp ideological contrast to their own. Robert Walsh, whose espousal of Federalist principles as editor of the *American Register* and the *American Review of History and Politics* had been so ardent that this latter journal met an early demise,<sup>26</sup> voiced his opposition to the American Russian festivals. This Philadelphia journalist censured his former law teacher, Robert Goodloe Harper, for the latter's part in the Georgetown celebration, and his adulation of both Russian military prowess and her civilization. Walsh criticized Harper's address for "its tendency to inspire too lofty an idea, of the general worth of the Russians. . . ." Like Niles, Walsh lamented that Americans should admire a power whose name was "infamous throughout the civilized world." In a verdict based upon a study concerning which he explained "I carefully perused all the books I could find relating to the history, morals, and resources of Russia," the Philadelphian concluded:

There is no government, or people, on record, whose history is more atrocious, in almost every stage. It is particularly, until the commencement of the last century; one shocking issue of cruelty, perfidy, ruthless vengeance, and insatiable ambition:—The people brutal, ferocious and slavish, to the last degree; the government fitted in every respect to foster their vices; wildly sanguinary and anarchical within; not less arbitrary than mutable, both at home and abroad; always prone to plunder and oppress.<sup>27</sup>

Walsh declared that Europe had come to a sorry state of affairs when

<sup>25</sup>*The Savannah Republican*, cited in *National Intelligencer*, April 15, 1813. Italics *The Savannah Republican's*.

<sup>26</sup>Walsh refused to cease his violent opposition to the war, even during hostilities.

<sup>27</sup>*Correspondence Respecting Russia Between Robert Goodloe Harper, Esq. and Robert Walsh, Jun. Together with the Speech of Mr. Harper, Commemorative of the Russian Victories*. Edited by Robert Walsh. Philadelphia. 1813. p. 30. Walsh's Reply to Harper, July 27, 1813. In the advertisement Walsh stated that he originally planned a "disquisition" of his own respecting the social and political conditions of that country and that he had diligently searched the "best histories and statistical accounts . . . the most valuable memoirs and books of travel" on the subject. Walsh's history of Russia was the first written by an American.

Alexander was viewed as a "Deliverer." ". . . Nothing could exemplify more piteously the wretched condition of the European continent," he stated, "than that it should be compelled to sign for the triumph of their [Russian] arms: to look to them as deliverer." Although admitting a Russian victory would be less calamitous than a Napoleonic triumph, he believed both régimes destructive of individual freedom and republican government. "Both would, I fear, pursue the same end—of universal dominion; that is, by influence, where direct legislation would be impossible."

Harper's reply to his attacker, while in part a concession to Walsh's interpretation of the undesirable consequences of a Russian victory, did not alter the view of the main speaker of the Georgetown Russian festival regarding the beneficence of that country's contemporary régime. Granting that "for Russia to completely conquer France, if it were possible, would undoubtedly be a very great mischief inferior only to the complete subjugation of Russia by France," he declared that he relied greatly "on the personal character of Alexander, which I have always viewed in a very different light, from that in which it has been commonly represented. . . ." Defending Russian civilization against Walsh's description of atrocities, he asked his critic: "But are you sure, my dear Sir, that in forming your opinion concerning the manners and character of the Russian nation, and of its government, you have not overlooked, or estimated too lowly, the influence of three such reigns, as those of Peter, Catherine, and Alexander?"<sup>28</sup> Harper viewed the work of these three monarchs of inestimable value to the progress of Russia, and compared Russia to an adolescent giant, requiring only time to grow to full maturity. Russia was backward because she was an infant in the family of nations. Her recent growth, however, was tremendous.

Many of her possessions are new. They require time to amalgamate with the old ones. Her limbs require time to become firmly knitted together. The giant is yet in gristle. He requires time for his bones to harden, and his sinews to acquire full form and vigour. The reign of Alexander is calculated to afford this time.<sup>29</sup>

To expect that Eustaphieve, the Russian Consul at Boston, would abstain from the debate of two illustrious Americans respecting the merits of his native land, would be to ask that discretion

<sup>28</sup>*Correspondence, op. cit.* Harper's reply to Walsh, August 7, 1813. pp. 38-59 *passim*.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

become the handmaid of versatile ambition. While charge met countercharge in the American debate over the character of Russia, the Boston Consul attacked Walsh in a discourse wherein pungence was matched only by verbosity. When, in 1813, the Russian Consul published a translation of the Russian Chuikevich's *Reflections on the War of 1812*,<sup>30</sup> over half of the volume was devoted to invective against the American journalist. Of Walsh's ability to treat Russia adequately, the Boston Consul in a Hudibrian characterization compared him to . . . "Tom Thumb the great, of giant-killing memory, [who] brandishes his mighty sword in the air, strikes here, hits there, spares none, mounts the back of Buonaparte [sic], sticks his spurs in the sides of the Russian bear, makes his late breakfast upon Prussia, and dines upon Austria, and then devours the huge animal himself."<sup>31</sup> Because of Walsh's statement that his perusal of books on Russia was for the purpose of a projected work regarding that country, Eustaphie's invective knew no restraint in denouncing the proposed publication. The Russian predicted:

. . . if he brings forth his intended work, commenced and matured under the influence of the same spirit which he has already evinced; if he adopts some spurious off-spring of foreign calumniators, dresses it in his own fashion, and palms it upon the public, as one recognized by Russia for her own; it will not be my fault—it will not be for want of will or means, if the bantling is not stripped of all its decoying ornaments, exposed in its pure naked deformity, and sent back to its illegitimate parents.<sup>32</sup>

Napoleon's disastrous campaign in Russia appears to have divided American opinion of Russia into two opposing camps. That nation was hailed as the world's deliverer against an all-powerful militaristic dictatorship, or damned for its despotism and barbarism.

<sup>30</sup>The full title is *Reflections On The War of 1812, by Tchuykevitch, translated from the Russian by Mr. Eustaphie, with Strictures on The Correspondence Respecting Russia*. Boston, 1813.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.* p. 117.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.* The "foreign calumniators" referred to by Eustaphie, were the editors of the *Edinburgh Review*. Issue No. 41 contained an unfavorable review of Eustaphie's *Resources of Russia*. In *A Reply to The Edinburgh Reviewers*, the Russian charged them with plagiarism—not from British journals, but from Walsh's *Review*!

Walsh, in a letter to George Ticknor, found the Russian's "coarseness, is not so easily forgotten . . . as it dishonors the good society, which he has been suffered to frequent in your city. . . ." M. Frederick Lochemes, *Robert Walsh: His Story* p. 75. New York, 1941.

# Pobedonostsev and Panslavism

BY WARREN B. WALSH

KONSTANTINE Petrovich Pobedonostsev (1827-1907) first became associated with the Imperial family in 1861 when he was appointed to lecture to the Grand Dukes (Nicholas, Alexander, and Vladimir) on legal subjects. His first concern was with Nicholas, the Crown Prince, whom he accompanied on the latter's journey about the Empire. Nicholas' death in 1865 transferred the succession to Alexander and shifted Pobedonostsev's attention to him. There gradually developed a very close and cordial association between the two, and Pobedonostsev became Alexander's most trusted adviser—a position he enjoyed as long as Alexander lived.<sup>1</sup> It may be recalled in passing that Pobedonostsev also served as tutor and adviser to Nicholas II.

One of the bonds between Pobedonostsev and Alexander III was their common interest in Slavophilism and Panslavism. Pobedonostsev counted himself a member of the Moscow group of Slavophiles and long maintained close contacts with them, especially with his one-time school fellow, Ivan Aksakov. The linkage ran mostly, though not exclusively, through Anna and Catherine Tiutchev, daughters of the Slavophil poet. Pobedonostsev first met Anna while he was tutor and she was governess for the Imperial family. She later married Aksakov. She often supplied Alexander with Slavophil materials and corresponded with him, directly at first; later, through Pobedonostsev.

Pobedonostsev, somewhat later, introduced to Alexander a protégé of his, one Adolf Dobrianski. Dobrianski was a leader of Carpatho-Ukrainians or, as the Russophiles called them, the Ugro-Rus, whose homeland was then part of Hungary. Dobrianski's notorious pro-Russianism made him suspect to the Hungarians, and he was forced to flee to Galicia at the time of the 1848 Revolution. He returned the next year with the Russian troops who suppressed the revolution, and resumed his position of leadership. Shortly thereafter he led a delegation of his people to the new Emperor, Franz

<sup>1</sup>This story is very well told in an anonymous article entitled, "Pobedonostsev and Alexander III," *The Slavonic and East European Review*. (London) Vol. VII, No. 19 (June, 1928) pp. 30-54. This article is based partly upon Pobedonostsev's unpublished correspondence with Catherine Tiutchev.

Josef, to demand certain cultural autonomies. The demands were granted and Dobrianski was named Governor-General of Carpatho-Ukraine. But Dobrianski's open championship of union with Russia later brought about his dismissal by Franz Josef and the revocation of the cessions.<sup>2</sup> In 1875, Dobrianski went to Russia and established working arrangements both with the Slavophiles and with the Slavic Benevolent Committees. It was on this occasion that he met the future Tsar.

Alexander II frowned upon these activities and for a time both the Crown Prince and his tutor were politically suspect. They continued their associations with the Slavophil-Panslav groups, however, and the conspiratorial nature of this business probably tightened the bonds between them.<sup>3</sup>

At the height of the crisis which preceded the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, Aksakov delivered an inflammatory speech before the Moscow Slavic Committee. The speech eulogized Alexander II as the great successor of Ivan, Peter, and Catherine, and urged him to carry on their work by conquering Constantinople and the Balkans. The police confiscated the text of the speech, but Anna Fedorovna (née Tiutchev) Aksakov saw to it that a copy reached the Crown Prince. The latter's response, which went through Pobedonostsev, was somewhat mixed.

When you write to Anna Fedorovna or to Aksakov himself [he instructed Pobedonostsev] please thank her for sending her husband's speech and for the note. I am afraid some sort of unpleasantness will arise again if I answer her myself.

The story of Aksakov's Moscow speech is all very sad and very foolish. It was done rashly and thoughtlessly.

. . . much in it was pleasing to me, but there were parts which ought not to have been printed.<sup>4</sup>

A similar, even more cautious reserve toward Aksakov on the part of Alexander becomes apparent after the latter succeeded to the throne. Nonetheless, his attitude was not unfriendly. In notifying the Tsar of Aksakov's sudden death, Pobedonostsev lamented: "This is an irreplaceable loss. Few indeed are such pure and honorable people with such deep love for Russia and all things Russian."

<sup>2</sup>*Loc. cit.*, p. 42; M. Hrushevsky. *History of Ukraine*, New Haven, 1941, pp. 491-2.

<sup>3</sup>"Pobedonostsev and Alexander III," *loc. cit.*, pp. 40-42.

<sup>4</sup>M. N. Pokrovsky (Ed.) *K. P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty. Pisma i zapiski*. Vol. I (*Novum Regnum*), Parts 1 and 2. Moscow, 1923. (Hereafter cited as *Pisma*.) Pt. 2, p. 1018, #1016. Alexander to Pobedonostsev. Dated 16 March, 1877.



To which the Tsar replied: "Truly the loss, to his kin, is irreplaceable. He was truly Russian, with a pure soul, and, although a maniac on certain questions, everywhere and always a defender of Russian interests."<sup>5</sup>

Pobedonostsev's great sense of loss at Aksakov's death may well have been because the two men shared a most exalted opinion of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Procurator's feeling stands forth in a statement which he once made to the leaders of the Ukrainian clergy.

From the East, whence radiated the light of Christ over all the earth, we took unto ourselves our faith, took the teachings of the church, took the unspeakable, incomparable beauty of the divine worship; and in HIM laid our Russian soul—with the deep, mighty words of our language and the wonderful sound of our native songs. Yet more: was it not the Russian soul alone which beautified and loved that wonderful sound of the Russian bells which so mysteriously wakes us, and calls us to church and from the earth—home, to heaven. From the ancient tree planted in the East by the saints and apostles of the universal church, we took a mighty harvest and from it, united with it, there grew in our land a leafy tree and it covered the whole earth with its shade, and it draws beneath its shade those tongues of the same tribe, and those of our same origin to whom we joyously give both our Bible and our church liturgies in their native dialects.<sup>6</sup>

The reference to native dialects, which seems somewhat out of character, is probably explicable by the nature of the audience to whom he spoke and with whom he was at that time seeking to establish closer relations. As a general policy Pobedonostsev discouraged rather than encouraged non-Russian languages.<sup>7</sup> It is also well worth noting that in the quoted passage he spoke not of the *Slavic* soul, but of the *Russian* soul. Here is at least an indication that Pobedonostsev was less of a Panслав than a Panrussian.

His relations to the Slavic Committees are revealing both of his distrust of any "popular" movement and of his willingness to use the Committees to further Panrussian designs. Both attitudes were shared by Alexander. In 1876 the then Crown Prince wrote Pobedonostsev: "I completely share your opinion that it is time for the Government to take into its own hands all Slavic Committees, contributions, and all that popular movement, else God knows what will come of it or how it may end."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 2, p. 556, #510. Dated 27 January, 1886.

<sup>6</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. II, p. 832, #773 (pp. 831-835).

<sup>7</sup>See, e.g., *Pisma*. Pt. I, pp. 8718, #71.

<sup>8</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 2, pp. 1016-1018, #1015. (P. 1917). Dated 23 October, 1876.



A decade later, Pobedonostsev warned D. A. Tolstoy, then Minister of the Interior:

There will be a general meeting of the Slavic Committee on Sunday. One is naturally apprehensive lest it occur to them to make political speeches which would be extremely undesirable in the present situation. Orest Miller will undoubtedly appear, and from this orator an outburst can be expected. P. P. cannot be depended upon either.<sup>9</sup>

But between these warnings Pobedonostsev, on at least one occasion, had made use of the Slavic Committees for purposes of his own. The procedure involved the Finance Minister, Bunge; two priests, the Tsar, and Pobedonostsev himself. The story is not fully told in Pobedonostsev's papers but enough of it is given to prove that the Austrian Government was fully justified in its accusations against Russian meddling in Austrian affairs. The matter had, therefore, some international importance and thus possesses some interest even now.

The two clergymen involved were I. G. Naumovich and M. F. Raevsky. Archpriest Raevsky was a member of the St. Petersburg Slavic Committee. He was, at this time, the Chaplain of the Russian Consulate in Vienna. The incident shows that he was also an active agent of the Panslav (or Panrussian) group. Naumovich, a native Galician, was a Uniate priest who later left that church for the Russian Orthodox. Dobrianski was also involved in the transaction, which is significant in itself.

The incident, which took place in the Spring of 1883, began with an instruction from Pobedonostsev to Bunge. The full text of the confidential memorandum was as follows:

On the 13th of February last, the Emperor, acting on my humble recommendation, most graciously decreed that: from the sum of two thousand rubles designated in the estimates of the Holy Synod for certain uses by His Majesty, a thousand rubles should be given, through me, for the assistance of the Russian priest, Ivan Naumovich, resident of Galicia in the Austrian Empire. Accordingly, I ask you to deliver the indicated one thousand rubles to me for the secret transmission as designated.<sup>10</sup>

The wording leaves no doubt that Pobedonostsev was the instigator, nor that the action had the Tsar's approval. Unfortunately, the documents give no explanation of the use which Naumovich was to make of the money. A clue which is indicative but not conclusive appears elsewhere in Pobedonostsev papers. One letter, dated April

<sup>9</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 2, pp. 562/3, #520. Dated 20 November, 1886

<sup>10</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 1, p. 309, #288. Dated March 2, 1883.

6, 1885, speaks of Naumovich's presence in Russia at the head of a deputation from Galicia. The following October, after Naumovich had returned to Austrian Galicia, Pobedonostsev wrote to the Tsar:

I am ashamed to trouble your Imperial Majesty, amid your many cares and preoccupations, with still more reading, but I consider it necessary to show you this letter from the Priest Naumovich which I received yesterday. In it is expressed the truly despairing wail of the Russian population of Galicia over their inescapable plight in the struggle with the Polish administration to whom they were given over by Austria. Naumovich, who recently came over from the Uniate religion and broke all ties with Rome, is a respectable fellow and actually serves as the best representative of the greatest part of the Russian inhabitants of Galicia.<sup>11</sup>

It does not seem unreasonable to assume that the thousand rubles were intended to assist Naumovich in his pro-Russian, anti-Austrian agitation. Since he was obviously in Pobedonostsev's good graces two years later, it may also be assumed that he discharged his assignment to the satisfaction of his paymaster.

A minor mystery over a time lapse appears in Bunge's response to Pobedonostsev's letter. That was dated March 2d. Bunge's reply is dated April 2d but opens with the words, "In response to your letter, received today. . . ." Did the letter take a month in transmission from the Procurator-General of the Holy Synod to the Minister of Finance? Or were Russian Ministers, like lesser mortals, not above blaming their procrastinations on the post? It is, of course, unimportant in itself. But coupled with Bunge's explanation of the channel and means of transmission, it raises certain questions. The text of Bunge's letter, which was marked "Secret," follows:

In response to your letter, received today [sic] and in order to avoid undesirable publicity, I have the honor of forwarding to Your Excellency a promissory note for fifteen thousand gulden in the name of the Archpriest of our church in Vienna, Michael Raevsky. With this, making use of the assent expressed by Your Excellency, I most humbly beg you to give suitable directions regarding the use of the sum now transferable to his name. I humbly beg Your Excellency to accept my assurance of my great respect and most sincere devotion.<sup>12</sup>

Who suggested Raevsky as the transmittal agent? Was that Bunge's idea? Pobedonostsev had originally directed that the money be sent to him for transmittal to Naumovich. And what was the agreement to which Bunge refers—to what had the Procurator expressed assent? The published documents do not supply the answers.

<sup>11</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 2, p. 507, #452. Dated 23 October, 1885. Also Pt. 2, pp. 499-500, #444.

<sup>12</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 1, pp. 330-331, #328.

One cannot escape the suspicion of a hiatus in the collection. At any rate, once Bunge had taken the matter in hand, things went on apace although the details of the transaction are a little confusing.

The note for fifteen thousand guldens was apparently sent to Raevsky who seems to have cashed it and to have handed the money to Dobrianski for transmission to Naumovich. The Pobedonostsev papers contain a receipt for fifteen thousand guldens. Raevsky is named as the donor and the receipt is signed by A. I. Dobrianski.<sup>13</sup> Raevsky forwarded this directly to Pobedonostsev. His accompanying letter explains that, "Father Naumovich will come to Vienna himself to get the money and I will send you his receipt later."<sup>14</sup> This receipt, however, is not included in the published papers.

The significance of this single, documented incident ought not to be exaggerated into proof of a whole policy. The whole business may, of course, have been perfectly innocent. The general circumstances and the known records of the participants seem to argue otherwise. The secrecy which surrounded the transaction, and even the incompleteness of the records, may prove nothing but bureaucratic secrecy on the part of the men involved. But the increasing tenseness of the international relations and particularly the growing hostility between Austria and Russia over "Panslavism" would indicate that this was neither incidental nor exceptional.

Historians have long known, in a general way, that Pobedonostsev and, through him, Alexander III, had associations with Panslavism. The evidence presented here has been at least technically available for a quarter century, but it has not been readily accessible to American students. If the specific and documented illustrations have given clearer meaning to the familiar generalization, this article has served the purpose for which it was intended.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 1, p. 331, #330. Dated at Vienna, 7-19 April, 1883.

<sup>14</sup>*Pisma*. Pt. 1, p. 331, #329. Dated at Vienna, 11 April, 1883.

<sup>15</sup>I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. Daniel Gallik, currently a student in the Russian Program of Syracuse University, in the preliminary research for this task.

# Twilight of Absolutism: 1905\*

BY MICHAEL FLORINSKY

ON December 19, 1904, Port Arthur, Russia's Far-Eastern stronghold, surrendered to the Japanese. The consternation created by this staggering defeat was immediately overshadowed by untoward domestic events. Early in January a strike broke out in St. Petersburg and within a few days spread to a number of factories employing tens of thousands of workers. The movement was directed by the Assembly (*Sobranie*) of Russian Workingmen, an association sponsored and financed by the police and headed by the priest, George Gapon, who conceived the plan of a dramatic appeal to the Tsar. On Sunday, January 9, 1905, columns of workers bearing a petition listing their grievances and wishes (they ranged from minor abuses to the convocation of a Constituent Assembly) converged from distant suburbs upon the palace square. The authorities were fully aware of the proposed demonstration. The marchers were peaceful and orderly, some of them, indeed, carried portraits of the Tsar and sacred icons. They were stopped, nevertheless, by cordons of troops and when they refused to disperse were fired upon. The actual number of victims was probably larger than the official estimate of 130 killed and several hundred wounded.<sup>1</sup>

The "Bloody Sunday" produced a tremendous impression both at home and abroad. Sviatopolk-Mirsky and the higher police officials resigned. To mitigate the sinister effects of the butchery, the Tsar received a deputation of workers hand-picked by the newly appointed

\*This article is part of a chapter from the author's forthcoming history of Russia to be published by the Macmillan Company [Ed.].

<sup>1</sup>In spite of the large literature on Gapon, his actual motives remain unclear. His association with the security police went back to 1902, but although he consulted with police officials and received subsidies, he was no ordinary *agent provocateur*. Documentary evidence suggests that his real object was to counteract revolutionary influences among the workingmen (even though some of the demands of the January petition were revolutionary) and to organize the loyal elements of labor into patriotic fraternal associations. The tea-room clubs he established were for a time remarkably successful. After January 9, Gapon issued a violent denunciation of the Tsar, the bureaucracy, and the army, was unfrocked (March 1905), fled abroad, and joined the Social Revolutionary Party, but soon resumed his relations with the security police and returned to Russia. He was hanged, by order of the Central Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party, in a lonely summer cottage in Finland, in March, 1906. The assassination was planned by P. Rutenberg.

Governor-General of St. Petersburg, D. F. Trepov (January 19). Labor, however, refused to be lured by this naïve strategem; some of the delegates were even forced by the resentment of their fellow-workers to give up their jobs. The Zemstvos, municipalities, and other bodies resumed their agitation for constitutional reforms. Ridden by strikes and political demonstrations the universities were closed until the autumn. On February 4th, the Grand Duke Serge Aleksandrovich, Governor-General of Moscow and the Tsar's uncle and brother-in-law (he was married to a sister of the Tsarina) was killed by a bomb hurled into his carriage by the Social Revolutionary, I. P. Kalyaev, an expelled student and son of a police officer. The assassination was planned by Savinkov and its perpetrators were shielded from the police by Azef.<sup>2</sup>

Three ill-assorted enactments appeared on February 18, 1905. A manifesto written without consultation of any of the ministers except Pobedonostsev inveighed anew against the opposition and called upon all loyal Russians to rally round the throne. A rescript addressed to Sviatopolk-Mirsky's successor, A. G. Bulygin, announced the Emperor's intention to summon "the elected representatives of the people" in order that they might participate "in the preliminary elaboration and discussion of legislative bills;" that is, to convoke a consultative representative assembly. A *ukaz* to the Senate upheld the right of every subject of the Crown "to be heard directly by the monarch" and ordered the Council of Ministers to examine proposals made by private persons and institutions, for the betterment of public welfare. The *ukaz* appeared to invite and legalize the political agitation which the manifesto roundly condemned. Its practical effects, however, must not be exaggerated (Witte regarded the *ukaz* as a meaningless and empty gesture), although it probably facilitated the propaganda campaign of the opposition, especially among the peasants. Of greater immediate importance was a decree of April 17 which proclaimed the principle of religious tolerance and abrogated the discriminatory laws affecting dissenters.

The pusillanimity and tardiness of official moves favored the more extreme elements of the opposition. By the time the government reluctantly conceded popular representation in an advisory assem-

<sup>2</sup>Boris Savinkov and Evno Azef were leaders of the terrorist organization of the Social Revolutionary Party; the latter was simultaneously an agent of the secret police. His exposure by the journalist and historian, V. L. Burtsev, created a major scandal and dealt political terrorism a blow from which it never recovered.



bly, the bulk of liberal opinion had rallied to the support of a Constituent Assembly to be elected in accordance with the quadripartite formula: universal suffrage and secret, direct, and equal vote. These slogans were propagated by the Union of Liberation and the fourteen newly founded professional unions<sup>3</sup> which, in May, 1905, established a central organ, the Union of Unions (*Soyuz Soyuzov*) under the chairmanship of Miliukov. A similar program was advocated by the Peasants' Union organized by radical intellectuals in July. The Zemstvo conferences held in February, April, and May moved, although more cautiously, in the same direction. The May conference elected a delegation which waited on the Emperor (June 6) but the gracious audience failed to bring a reconciliation. In an intransigent mood and regardless of police orders prohibiting the meeting, Zemstvo leaders convened in Moscow in July. The conference approved the draft of a "fundamental law" (Imperial Constitution) which, like a similar proposal issued by the Union of Liberation in October, 1904, embodied the principles of Western political democracy, and was widely circulated. An awkwardly phrased resolution proclaimed the intention of the conference "to enter into close contact with the broad masses of the people for the joint discussion of impending political reform" and "for the conquest of liberties necessary to make it effective." The loyal opposition was treading the slippery path that leads to revolutionary action.

Developments in Manchuria were not such as to strengthen the position of the government. In February, Russia's army suffered a terrible defeat at Mukden and in the middle of May her fleet was annihilated in the straits of Tsushima. A few days later both belligerents accepted Theodore Roosevelt's offer to enter into peace negotiations. The domestic situation went from bad to worse. Agrarian disturbances broke out in many parts of the country, particularly in the Baltic and Western provinces and in the Caucasus. Strikes, which had subsided in the spring, were again numerous and bitter. Early in June, troops were used against the strikers in Lodz, and a general strike was declared in Odessa. The Social Revolutionary terroristic groups were again active, one of their more not-

<sup>3</sup>These were the unions of university professors, lawyers, agronomists, statisticians, doctors, veterinaries, railway employees, journalists and authors, members of Zemstvo assemblies, engineers, bookkeepers and accountants, teachers, pharmacists; also the union for the emancipation of women and the union for the emancipation of the Jews.

able victims being the military governor of Moscow, Count P. P. Shuvalov (June 28). Disaffection spread to the armed forces. On June 14, the battleship *Potemkin* of the Black Sea fleet mutinied, raised the red flag, and wrote in the revolutionary annals a bloody epic (ably, albeit romantically, portrayed in the well-known Soviet film) which ended somewhat ingloriously eleven days later with the surrender of the mutineers to the Rumanian authorities at Constantza.

The agitation of the opposition and the excesses of the revolutionaries invited retaliation on the part of the supporters of autocracy. The earliest organization of the extreme right was the Russian Assembly (Russkoe Sobranie) founded in 1901, an upper-class society for the dissemination of information concerning Russian achievements in art and science. To check mounting discontent, however, the Assembly soon engaged in nationalistic and monarchical counter propaganda which may, in part, account for the appearance of ultra-conservative groups in the universities (the so-called academic unions) and throughout the country. Most of the latter were eventually absorbed in the Union of the Russian People (Souz Russkovo Naroda) established at the end of October, 1905, in St. Petersburg, under the leadership of the notorious Dr. A. I. Dubrovin. The program of the Union was an elaboration of Uvarov's formula—Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationalism—tinged, however, with hostility towards the bureaucracy as a barrier between the throne and the people. The movement's outstanding characteristic was its militant nationalism and intense hatred of Finns, Poles, and especially the Jews. As these sentiments were shared by Nicholas, who in December, 1905, accepted honorary badges of the Union for himself and his son, and by many high officials (Pobedonostsev, Plehve, Goremykin), Dubrovin and his peers were assured of official patronage of which they made extensive and unscrupulous use. The benevolent attitude of the authorities might explain the Union's success in building up within a short time a network of some 3,000 local agencies. Most of its following came from the lower middle class, small tradesmen, minor government officials, and the clergy. The ultra-nationalistic leaders were, with rare exception, men of low intellectual and moral standards who did not hesitate to play up the baser instincts and prejudices of the masses.

The prominence of the Jews in the revolutionary movement made them an easy target of the reactionary clique. Although anti-semitism flourished under Alexander III, few pogroms occurred from

1881 to 1903. The spell was broken on Easter Day (April 8) of the latter year when a wholesale massacre of the Jews and looting of their property took place in Kishinev, Bessarabia. For two days a delirious mob had complete control of the city; over 700 dwelling houses and 600 business establishments were ransacked, the number of victims killed and injured running into hundreds. The attack was planned and provoked by a group of anti-semites led by P. A. Krushevan, editor of the Jew-baiting sheet *Bessarabets* (*The Bessarabian*) which used the apocryphal story of a ritual murder to incite the populace.<sup>4</sup> The police and the troops did not intervene until the end of the second day of rioting. While the pogrom was condemned by the government and by all shades of opinion, and the rioters were tried and suffered various punishments, there was much evidence to support the widely-held view that the outbreak could have been prevented had the authorities so wished. The Kishinev massacre was followed by one in Gomel (August, 1903) and by waves of pogroms in southern and western Russia in the Autumn of 1904 and in the Spring and Summer of 1905. As in Kishinev, the riots were instigated by ultranationalistic groups and were made possible by the ineptitude and, sometimes, the connivance of the authorities. These savage and despicable manifestations of racial intolerance added nothing to the stability and prestige of the monarchy which their perpetrators ostensibly had at heart.

The law of August 6, 1905, defining the procedure for elections to the State Duma, as the consultative assembly announced in February was to be known, was greeted with a chorus of abuse and derision. The franchise, based on the familiar theory that the peasants were devoted to the Crown, was so framed as to ensure, through an intricate system of indirect voting, a large representation of the peasantry, while high property qualifications disfranchised the bulk of the urban population, especially intellectuals and industrial workers. The conservatives disapproved of both the proposed assembly and the method by which it was to be chosen. The opposition was of one mind; that the Duma should be boycotted or should be used for propaganda purposes and the assembly "torpedoed from within." The government, moreover, had to bear the

<sup>4</sup>Krushevan's brand of anti-semitism was based on religious and not on racial grounds. He urged that the Jews should be given the option either to join the Russian Church or to be deported. Converted Jews were to be freed from all disabilities; even titles of nobility and decorations were to be distributed among the educated converts—by lot!

onus of the unpopular peace settlement agreed upon in the middle of August, although its terms were less severe than might have been expected in view of Russia's undistinguished war record.

A surprise law of August 27, 1905 granted autonomy to the universities. Irresistible outside pressure and the broad interpretation put on this loosely-worded enactment by university authorities (now elected by academic corporations) turned the lecture halls into public forums where freedom of speech and of assembly blossomed immune from police intervention. Revolutionary oratory flowing from the rostrums deserted by the professors inflamed the imagination of eager audiences in which university students mingled with government officials, tradesmen, artisans, factory workers, soldiers, starry-eyed society matrons, housewives, and even children. The St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies soon to be established was, according to its president, G. S. Khrustalev-Nosar, a by-product of university autonomy.

Political tension having reached the breaking point, the long-expected mass action took the form of a general strike. In the second half of September, the Moscow printers and bakers laid down their tools and a sympathetic strike was declared in St. Petersburg, but by October 5 the movement seemed to subside. On October 7, however, a railway strike organized by the Railway Union, an association that functioned openly although lacking official recognition, broke out in Moscow and within a few days spread to the entire network, engulfed the telegraph and telephone services, and paralyzed practically all industry. The striker's original demands—a Constituent Assembly, repeal of the "state of emergency" legislation, civil liberties, and the eight-hour-day—were soon supplemented by purely revolutionary ones: a democratic republic, political amnesty, disarming of the police and troops, and the arming of labor. This program was enthusiastically endorsed by the professional unions. Excited crowds, carrying red banners and revolutionary posters, roamed the streets. Banks, shops, schools, law courts, government, Zemstvo and municipal offices, even pharmacies and hospitals closed their doors. There were no newspapers, no electricity, no gas, and, in some localities, no water. Barricades were erected on the streets of Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, and Odessa. The economic and business life of the country came to a standstill.

On October 13, the St. Petersburg Soviet (Council) of Workers' Deputies convened for the first time, with 30 or 40 delegates present; by the end of November, their number had risen to 562. Theoret-

ically, there was one delegate per 500 workers but actually, according to Leon Trotsky, one of the Soviet's leading figures, some of the deputies represented much smaller groups. The revolutionary parties had engineered the elections, and they dominated the Soviet and the executive committee it chose on October 17. The strongest influence was that of the Mensheviks. Lenin did not return to St. Petersburg from abroad until November and he took little direct part in the work of the Soviet, although he was active behind the scenes. The Union of Unions and other left-wing groups immediately acknowledged the leadership of the self-styled workers' parliament. On October 17 appeared the first number of *Izvestia* (News), the Soviet's official organ.

On the same day, the Tsar signed a manifesto transforming Russia into a Constitutional Monarchy. In the enforced isolation of his country residence at Peterhof, which because of the strike was accessible only by sea, Nicholas, since October 9, had been in touch with Witte. In August, 1903, Witte, a severe critic of Russia's Far-Eastern policy, was dismissed from the office of Minister of Finance he had occupied since 1892 and was relegated to the honorary position of Chairman of the Committee of Ministers. Recalled from semi-retirement in the summer of 1905 to head the Russian peace delegation, he returned to St. Petersburg in September, his reputation greatly enhanced by the Portsmouth treaty, for which he was rewarded with the title of Count, and by the attentions showered upon him in France and Germany where he had powerful political and financial connections. In spite of his short temper and arrogant manner, Witte had many political friends among both conservatives and liberals and was, indeed, generally regarded as the only man capable of saving the dynasty. The advice he tendered Nicholas in the fateful days of October was to choose between a constitution and a military dictatorship. He was willing (and many said, eager) to head a unified government under a constitution; with a dictatorship, however, in the success of which he did not believe, he refused to be associated. The emperor leaned towards the latter solution, but after his uncle, the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, the Imperial family's "strong man," tearfully declined the proffered dictatorial powers, and after Witte had rejected a compromise proposal drafted by Goremykin, the Tsar reluctantly accepted Witte's liberal program. The Manifesto of October 17 written by Witte contained the following provisions: (1) guarantee of fundamental civil liberties—freedom from arrest, freedom of opinion, of the press, of



assembly, and of association; (2) promise to amend the law of August 6 by enfranchising the groups excluded from participation in elections to the State Duma, and to ensure the further extension of the franchise by the new legislative assembly; and (3) announcement of the "immutable rule" that no law should be promulgated without the approval of the State Duma, which was also to exercise effective control over officials appointed by the Crown. The above principles were elaborated in Witte's report, confirmed by the Tsar and issued simultaneously with the Manifesto. The ministers were not consulted. According to the Minister of Finance, V. N. Kokovtsev, he knew nothing of the momentous change until the Manifesto was published.

The country, profoundly stirred by the October Manifesto, responded with conflicting emotions. The conservatives were frankly dismayed. The liberals vacillated between wild enthusiasm and dark premonition that the government was not in earnest and that the Manifesto was but an artifice. Miliukov, speaking in the evening of October 17th, characterized the Manifesto as a great victory but also as "a new stage of the struggle." The revolutionaries scornfully dismissed official promises even though they feared their repercussions on the unity of the revolutionary front. "Witte has come, but Trepov remains," Trotsky, one of the world's greatest pamphleteers, wrote in *Izvestia*. ". . . The proletariat knows what it does and what it does not want. It wants neither the police thug Trepov, nor the liberal financial shark Witte; neither the wolf's snout, nor the fox's tail. It rejects the police whip wrapped in the parchment of the constitution."

The immediate reaction, however, was one of uncontrollable excitement. Intoxicated with their first taste of liberty, people of every station and age, from sedate gray-haired bureaucrats to factory hands and children, poured into the streets and joined in noisy demonstrations and counter-demonstrations. There were red banners, revolutionary songs, and inflammatory oratory. But there were also demonstrators who carried portraits of Nicholas and marched to the strains of the national anthem "God save the Tsar." The two factions inevitably came to blows. The right-wing movement, although aided by the police, was not entirely synthetic. The general strike, by creating mass unemployment and disrupting the life of the community, provoked bitterness and resentment. Even before the publication of the Manifesto, the Moscow students, attacked by an angry mob, barricaded themselves in the university

building. After October 17, however, patriotic fervor turned primarily against the familiar scapegoat, the Jews. Between October 18 and 25, hundreds of pogroms swept towns and hamlets in and outside the Jewish pale, the most notable being those of Kiev and Odessa. Organized by ultra-nationalistic groups, condoned and sometimes instigated by the police, the pogroms, with the opportunity for looting, attracted the criminal dregs of society. They inflicted cruel indignities and sufferings on thousands of innocent people, and profoundly shocked and antagonized the western world. This was one of the first consequences of the October Manifesto which granted civil liberties to all the subjects of the Russian Crown.

The Manifesto of October 17, by proclaiming civil liberties which the laws still in force denied or narrowly circumscribed, put the administration in an impossible position and led to temporary government atrophy. Police regulations were no longer enforced. Official censorship became dormant. A new and even more formidable censorship, however, was exercised by the printers' union which refused to handle publications not to its liking, while scores of radical papers made their appearance and were freely circulated. The flames of revolt blazed throughout the borderlands. Finland, in the throes of a general strike, demanded the restoration of her constitutional liberties; mass demonstrations in Poland clamored for autonomy or independence. The new government headed by Witte met the wishes of Finland. A manifesto of October 22 abrogated all legislation, beginning with the manifesto of February 3, 1899, to which the Finns objected. A very different treatment was reserved for Poland where a "state of emergency" was proclaimed in the last days of October in order to combat activities "threatening the unity of the Empire." Disaffection made further progress in the armed forces. Kronstadt and Vladivostok mutinied at the end of October but both uprisings were swiftly suppressed.

The center of revolutionary agitation was the St. Petersburg Soviet, whose example was emulated by Soviets organized in Moscow, Odessa, and other cities. It parried the October Manifesto by decreeing that the general strike would continue. A strike, however, especially a political strike that brings no immediate economic benefits to the workers, is a double-edged weapon; unduly prolonged, it tends to disorganize the ranks of labor, particularly in a country which, like Russia in 1905, had no trade unions. The Soviet was forced, by a spontaneous back-to-work movement, to call off their strike (October 21), but it was made clear that the counter-order

was a tactical retreat, not a surrender: the proletariat, it was announced, "it will not lay down its arms" until the monarchy had been superseded by a democratic republic. The Soviet, accordingly, proceeded to make plans not only for new strikes but also for an armed uprising. This uncompromising program notwithstanding, the Soviet was not interfered with, partly because of the state of uncertainty and confusion prevailing in bureaucratic circles and, partly, as Witte explains in his memoirs, because he deemed it wise to wait until the Soviet had outlived its popularity with the masses of labor. In the meantime, the Soviet enjoyed a quasi-official status, met freely, issued orders, and negotiated with the head of the government. A partial amnesty granted on October 21 reinforced the ranks of the revolutionaries by permitting the return of many political exiles. It was not, however, regarded as adequate by either the Soviet or liberal opposition, and accentuated the demand for a full amnesty.

From the teeming industrial cities the revolutionary movement overflowed into the boundless expanse of rural Russia. In the closing months of 1905 the countryside was ablaze with agrarian disturbances. The worst outbreaks occurred in the provinces of Samara, Saratov, Chernigov, Kherson, and Tambov, and in the Baltic provinces where the situation was complicated by the secular antagonism between the German landed nobility, on the one hand, and the Latvian and Estonian peasantry, on the other. Over 2,000 manor houses were looted and burned, their owners were murdered or fled, and the damage caused in only ten of the most affected provinces was officially estimated at 29 million rubles. The outbreak of 1905 must, in part, be attributed to the ukaz of February 18 which invited private persons and institutions to make known their wishes for the betterment of public welfare. This dispensation was skillfully used for revolutionary propaganda among the peasantry by professional agitators and left-wing Zemstvo employees. In August 1905, the Peasants' Union, an underground organization directed by revolutionary intellectuals, held its first conference in Moscow. It reconvened openly in that city in November (6th-12th) and adopted a series of resolutions calling for the transfer of all land to the peasants, the summoning of a Constituent Assembly not later than February, and a political alliance with the industrial proletariat and organizations "defending the interests of the people." These demands were to be enforced by methods akin to a strike: refusal to comply with army drafts, and refusal to work for big

landowners. The government, having somewhat recovered its bearings, met the challenge by proclaiming a "state of emergency" in the Baltic provinces and other affected areas, by dispatching punitive expeditions to suppress the riots, and by arresting the entire Moscow bureau of the Peasant's Union (November 14).

The Soviet, meanwhile, was losing its hold over labor, if not its revolutionary ardor. A general strike ordered on November 1 met with scant response and was called off on the 5th. The campaign for the forcible introduction of the eight-hour day by stoppage of work at the expiration of that period was abandoned after a few hectic days. The telephone and telegraph strike (November 16) sponsored by the Soviet was no more successful. Witte judged the time opportune for the final showdown: on November 26 the president of the St. Petersburg Soviet, Krustalev-Nosar, a Jewish lawyer and a Menshevik, was arrested. The Soviet immediately elected a presiding committee of three members, including Trotsky, and issued an appeal to the armed forces (November 27) together with a "financial manifesto" urging non-payment of taxes and withdrawals of gold (December 2).<sup>5</sup> The eight St. Petersburg papers which published the manifesto were seized by the police. On December 3, the building where the Soviet met was surrounded by troops and all of the deputies present were arrested.<sup>6</sup> A substitute Soviet was formed at once but it enjoyed none of the ephemeral prestige of its predecessor. A strike called early in December proved a lamentable failure. Leadership for a while passed to Moscow where a Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies was organized on December 4 and the supreme revolutionary weapon—armed uprising—was tried on the 10th. The population, however, did not support the insurgents, and a week later a loyal regiment of the guards, brought from St. Petersburg and supported by artillery, crushed the revolt. With the defeat of the

<sup>5</sup>The manifesto was signed by the Soviet and by the executive committee of the Peasants' Union, the Social Democratic Party, the Social Revolutionary Party, and the Polish Socialist Party.

<sup>6</sup>Of the approximately 300 deputies in the hands of the government only 52, charged with conspiracy to overthrow the existing order, were put on trial. The case was tried by a civil court and lasted for two-and-a-half months (September-November, 1906). Fifteen of the defendants, including Trotsky, were sentenced to deportation to Siberia for life; two received brief prison sentences; all others were acquitted. Trotsky began the long trek to Siberia in January 1907 but escaped before reaching his destination, and on March 2nd was back in St. Petersburg. After spending a few weeks in Finland he emigrated abroad.

Moscow uprising the overt resistance of the revolutionaries came to an end.

The government was still faced with the menace of sedition and disaffection in the armed forces. Serious instances of insubordination occurred among the troops of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Reval, and other army and naval bases. In the middle of November a mutiny led by Lieutenant Schmidt flared up in Sevastopol. It was expeditiously suppressed, but not until the battleship *Ochakov* had been set afire by shore batteries and some 2,000 sailors and soldiers made prisoners. An alarming situation developed in the Far East, where hordes of rebellious soldiers of Russia's defeated armies impatiently awaited repatriation, delayed by railway strikes and by the low traffic capacity of the Trans-Siberian line. The commanding officers having lost control over their troops, the Trans-Siberian railway for nearly three months was in the hands of an unruly soldiery. Measures for speedy demobilization and the ruthlessness of hand-picked punitive expeditions sent to Siberia succeeded, however, in restoring order by the end of January, 1906

The revolution of 1905 was over. Autocracy had foundered in the storm but the monarchy had survived, and the economic and social system emerged from the turmoil practically unscathed. The revolutionary forces were once more driven underground. Yet there was prophetic insight in Trotsky's dramatic summary of the 1905 defeat: "*La révolution est morte, vive la révolution.*"



# Anton Chekhov's "Surgery" and "A Cure for Hard Drinking"\*

Translated from the Russian

BY ANNA HEIFITZ

## SURGERY

A village hospital. In the absence of the doctor, who left to get married, patients are received by his assistant Sergei Kuzmich Kuryatin, a stout man of about forty in a worn jacket and pants. His face and manner express warm friendliness and sense of duty. Between the forefinger and third finger of his left hand, he holds a cheap, foul-smelling cigar.

The sexton, Efim Mikheich Vosmiglazov, enters the office. He is a sturdy old man in a brown cossack with a wide leather belt. His right eye is impaired. On his nose, there is a wart which from a distance looks like a big fly.

For a second the sexton looks around for an icon, and not finding one, makes the sign of the cross in the direction of a large bottle of carbolic acid. He then takes out from a red kerchief a communion wafer and bowing humbly, places it before the doctor's assistant as a token of good will.

"H'm, my respects to you," says the doctor's assistant, yawning. "What is your trouble?"

"My Sunday greetings to you and all respects, Sergei Kuzmich. To quote the just and truthful words of the psalm 'I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with tears.' I sat down the other day with my old woman to have some tea and God forbid such pain—not a drop could I swallow. It seemed as though there was nothing to be done but just to lie down and die. I just sipped a little and it gave me such pain that my strength simply failed me. And it wasn't only the very tooth but the whole side of the face. . . Such an aching pain, a throbbing pain! . . . It beats in my ear, excuse the comparison, as though there was a nail or some other object . . . it shoots and it shoots! It's for my sins, Sergei Kuzmich, for my sins!

\*These two sketches, "*Khirurgiya*" (1884) and "*Sredstvo ot zapoya*" (1885), as far as known, have not been previously translated into English [Ed.].

I have defiled my soul with shameful sins and have spent my life in sloth. Father deacon after liturgy reproached me: 'You stutter, Efim, and you snifle. You sing and one can't tell what you are singing.' But what kind of singing can one expect if I can't even open my swollen mouth; besides, I haven't slept a wink. . . ."

"H'm . . . Sit down. . . . Open your mouth!"

Kuryatin knits his brow and looks into the sexton's mouth. He finds among the teeth, yellowed by time and tobacco, one where a gaping cavity is visible.

"Father deacon ordered me to apply some vodka with horseradish, but that didn't help. My neighbor, Glikeriya Anisimovna, may the Lord preserve her, gave me a thread blest at the monastery of Mt. Athos to wear on my wrist and that, too, didn't ward off the pain. She told me to rinse the tooth with luke warm milk, but I, let me confess, could not obey her. It's Lent, you know and we of the Orthodox faith must not taste milk. I was afraid of God. . . ."

"It's all a prejudice. . . . One must pull it out, Efim Mikheich!"

"It's for you to know, Sergei Kuzmich. You studied . . . you know best what's to be done. . . . What to pull out, what to treat with drops or otherwise. That's why you doctors are considered our benefactors and are placed in a position to judge, whereas we must pray day and night to the end of our lives for God to watch over you."

"It's sheer nonsense," the assistant answers modestly, walking up to the medicine chest and examining the instruments. "Surgery isn't really anything much. It's just a matter of habit and firmness of hand. It's as easy as spitting. The other day Aleksandr Ivanych Egipetsky . . . also came with a toothache. . . . An educated man, one who wants to know the why and wherefore of everything. . . . Shakes hands, addresses you formally. He lived, mind you, seven years in St. Petersburg and hob-nobbed with all the professors there. . . . We had quite a session with him. He begged me for Christ's sake to pull out his tooth. Please, Sergei Kuzmich, pull it out, he entreated. And why not? I can pull it out, but here one must understand how to go about it—without knowledge one can't undertake it. . . . There are different kinds of teeth. Some can be pulled with pincers, some with forceps, others with a wrench."

The assistant takes a wrench and looks at it undecidedly, then puts it down and picks up the pincers.

"Well, open your mouth wider," says he approaching the sexton. "We'll get it . . . it's easy . . . easy as spitting. Only the gum

needs to be cut . . . the incision must be made along the vertical axis . . . that's all . . . (cuts open the gum) . . . that's all there is to it."

"May the good Lord bless you—our benefactors. We common folk don't have sense enough to understand, but the good Lord has enlightened you doctors. . ."

"Don't speak when your mouth is open. This one is easy to pull . . . there are cases where there are only roots. This is as easy as rolling off a log. . . (uses the pincers.) Keep still, don't move. . . Sit quietly. . . I'll have it out in a twinkling of an eye . . . (makes an incision). The main thing is to grasp it deep enough so as not to break off the crown."

"Ouch! . . . Holy Virgin!"

"Please. . . Don't grab me with your hand! Let go! . . . Stop it! Here it comes. It isn't easy."

"Heavenly Father! Good angels! Go ahead and pull it! Don't meddle with it everlastingly!"

"It's not that simple. . . It's surgery. One can't do it in a jiffy . . . There, there! . . ."

Vosmiglazov, crouching in pain, lifts his knee to his elbow, clutches and unclutches his fingers, his eyes bulge and he pants for air. His purple face is covered with perspiration; in his eyes there are tears.

Kuryatin in his excitement snorts, shifts from one foot to another before the sexton. An agonizing half minute passes . . . and the pincers slip away from the tooth. The sexton jumps up and pokes his fingers into his mouth, and finding the tooth in the old place, utters sarcastically: "You pulled? This is called pulling! May the devil pull you thus in hell. . . Thank you! Thank you very much! If you don't know how to pull teeth, why do you undertake it? I can't see daylight for pain."

"And why did you grab me with your hands?" says the assistant angrily. "I am pulling and you push my hand and talk foolish words."

"You are a fool yourself!"

"What! . . . Do you think it is easy to pull a tooth. Just try! It isn't going up to the belfry to set the bells a ringing!" (Teases him.) "As though you can judge! I pulled Mr. Egipetsky's tooth and he didn't complain. And he is a man of high standing, not your equal, and he didn't grab me. Sit down! Sit down, I say!"

"The pain is awful. I can't see light! Let me take a breath. . .

Oh! Lord! Jesus!" (sits down). "Only please don't linger—yank it out with one pull!"

"Don't you try to teach me! How hard it is to deal with such ignorant people. It's enough to drive one mad! Open your mouth!" (uses the pincers). "Surgery, my friend, is no joke! It isn't reading in the pulpit . . ." (makes an incision). "Don't move!"

"The tooth, it turns out, is a very old one and has deep roots. . . It's a hard job. Don't move. So. . . So. . . Don't move. Well" (a crackling noise is heard). "Just as I thought!"

Vosmiglazov sits without moving for a minute as though unconscious. He is stupefied. His eyes stare into space; his pale face is covered with perspiration.

"I should have done it with a wrench," mumbles the assistant. "What a mess!"

When the sexton came to, he stuck his fingers into his mouth and in the place of his sick tooth, he found two sharp projections.

"Confound you!" he exclaimed. . . "Satan himself sent you here to destroy us!"

"Let us hear no more from you! . . ." the assistant mumbles, putting the pincers back into the medicine chest. "Ignoramus, it seems you didn't get enough beatings in the seminary. Mr. Egipetsky, Aleksandr Ivanych lived seven years in St. Petersburg . . . what education . . . the suit he wore cost at least a hundred roubles . . . and he didn't curse. And what kind of a bird are you? Don't be afraid, you won't croak!"

The sexton grabs his wafer from the table and, holding his cheek with his hand, rushes out of the office.

#### A CURE FOR HARD DRINKING

The celebrated comedian Mr. Feniksov-Dikobrazov, Junior, in his private railway compartment arrived in the town of D. on a professional tour. Those who met him at the depot knew that the first class ticket had been bought at the last station before his destination in order to create an impression, and that up to that station, the celebrity travelled third class. Every one saw that in spite of the cold autumn weather he wore a summer cape and an old seal-skin cap. However, when Dikobrazov stepped from the train, everybody felt a certain thrill and desire to shake hands with him. The theatre manager Pochechuev according to the Russian custom kissed him three times and took him to his home.

The celebrity was scheduled to start his performances two days

after his arrival, but fate decreed otherwise. A day before the performance the pale, dishevelled manager came running to the ticket-office and informed them that Dikobrazov, Junior, was not able to play.

"He cannot play" declared Pochechuev tearing his hair. "What do you think of it? A month, a whole month we have been advertising with letters two feet long that we'll have Dikobrazov perform. We bragged and carried on, took in money for subscription tickets and all of a sudden such villainy! It's too little to hang him!"

"But what is it? What happened?" he was asked.

"Why, he started drinking, damn him!"

"But is it that important? After a night's sleep, he'll be as good as new."

"He'll croak sooner than he'll sober up! I knew him back in Moscow. As soon as he starts guzzling vodka, it takes him about two months to get over it. Hard drinking, yes hard drinking! It's my bad luck! And why should I be so unfortunate? Why should I be cursed by the Gods?"

Pochechuev, a tragedian by profession, naturally accompanied his words with characteristic gesticulations, beating his breast with his fists. "And how infamous, base, and contemptible am I to bend slavishly to the blows of fortune! Wouldn't it be wiser to give up the rôle of the man unlucky enough to drown in a tea-cup, and put a bullet through my head? What am I waiting for? Lord! what am I waiting for?" Pochechuev covered his face with his hands and turned to the window.

In the ticket office besides the cashier there were many actors and theatrical men; consequently there was no lack of advice, sympathy, consolation, and encouragement, but it all had a philosophical or prophetic character. The only one who took a different view was the cashier, a stout man with watery eyes.

"Why don't you, Prokl Lvovich," said he, "try to cure him"?

"Confirmed alcoholics can't be cured by the devil himself!"

"Don't say that. Our barber is wonderful at curing inveterate drinkers. The whole town goes to him for cures."

Like a sinking man clutching at a straw, Pochechuev jumped at this chance of a cure.

In about five minutes Fiodor Grebeshkov, the theatre's barber stood before him. Imagine a very tall and bony man with deep-set eyes, long thin beard, rough hands add to this a very close resemblance to a skeleton, made to move on screws and springs, clothe



the figure in a tattered black suit, and you have the portrait of Grebeshkov.

"How do you do, Fedya," Pochechuev addressed him. "I heard, my friend, that you have a remedy for alcoholics. Do me this favor, not in the name of service but for the sake of friendship, try to cure Dikobrazov! As you know he has started drinking."

"The Lord watch over him," Grebeshkov answered gloomily with a harsh voice. "I undertake to cure simple actors, merchants and clerks, but he is a celebrity known throughout the whole of Russia!"

"So what?"

"In order to drive the urge for drinking out of him one must effect a change in all the organs and joints of his body. Supposing I do cure him; when he gets well, he'll get angry! . . . 'You dog, how dare you touch my face?', he'll say. I know these celebrities!"

"No, no, please don't wriggle out of it, you know our Russian saying: if one calls one's self a mushroom, one's place is in the basket. Put on your cap and come along."

A quarter of an hour later when Grebeshkov entered Dikobrazov's room, the celebrity lay on his bed angrily looking at the suspended lamp. The lamp hung motionless but Dikobrazov, Junior, would not tear his eyes from it and muttered: "You'll start turning! I'll show you, damn you how to turn! I broke the decanter and I'll break you, you'll see! And why doesn't the ceiling turn? I understand, it's a conspiracy. But the lamp, the lamp! Smaller than everything, you vile thing, but turns more than anything else! You just wait. . . ."

The comedian got up from his bed, dragging the sheet along, knocking several glasses off a small table. Trembling, he directed his steps toward the lamp but when he reached half way, he stumbled on something tall and bony. . . .

"What's this!" he roared staring with a wild look. "Who are you? Where did you come from, eh?"

"I'll show you who I am. . . Get into bed!" And not waiting for the comedian to get into bed, Grebeshkov crashed into him and hit him with his fist in the back of the neck with such force that he fell head over heels into the bed. The comedian had never been beaten before and in spite of his intoxication looked at Grebeshkov in amazement and even with a certain amount of curiosity.

"Did you . . . did you hit me? Look here. . . You hit me!"

"I did, why? . . . Do you want to be hit again?"

The barber hit him once more and this time in the mouth. I don't know what produced the effect, whether the strong blows or the

novelty of the sensation, the eyes of the comedian stopped rolling and a rational expression appeared in them. He got up and not so much with anger as with curiosity started examining Grebeshkov's pale face and dirty coat.

"You fight . . . you fight?" he muttered. "You . . . you dare?"

"Shut up!" retorted the barber and again struck him in the face.

The frenzied comedian began to defend himself but Grebeshkov pressed one hand on his chest and with the other slapped his face.

"Go easy, please!" he heard Pochechuev's voice from the other room. "Please let him go, Fedenka!"

"Don't worry, Prokl Lvovich! You'll thank me later!"

"Take it easy, anyway!" said Pochechuev, pleading and looking into the comedian's room. "You don't seem to care, but it makes my flesh creep. Just think! In broad daylight a man is beaten, an intelligent man with full rights, one who is so well known, and in his own apartment to boot. . . That's awful!"

"But Prokl Lvovich, I don't beat them, but the devil that's in them. Be so kind as to go away, and don't worry."

"Lie down, devil!" said Fiodor again attacking the comedian. "Don't move!"

Dikobrazov was seized by terror. It seemed to him that everything which previously turned and was broken by him, now conspired against him and as a single mass flew at his head.

"Help, murder!" he shouted. "Save me! Help!"

"You can shout all you want, you devil. These blows are only blossoms, the berries will come later. Now listen, if you say another word or so much as move, I'll kill you! Yes I'll kill you and without any pity. There is no one to come to your rescue, nobody will come even if a cannon is fired. But if you calm down I'll give you some vodka. Here it is, vodka, right here!"

Grebeshkov pulled a bottle of vodka from his pocket and flashed it before the comedian's eyes. The drunkard seeing the object of his passion, forgot about the blows he had received and even yelled with delight. Grebeshkov took a dirty piece of soap and put it into the bottle. When the vodka foamed, he began putting all kinds of things into it. Saltpetre went into it, then ammonia, aluminum, epsom salts, sulphur, rosin, and other odds and ends which he picked up in a general store. The comedian looked at Grebeshkov with wild eyes, closely following the movements of the bottle. Finally the barber burned a piece of rag and threw the ashes into the vodka, shook it and approached the bed.

"Drink!" he said, pouring out half a glass. "Gulp it all down!"

The comedian drank it down with pleasure, gasped, and his eyes popped out. His face became pale and he was covered with a cold sweat.

"Drink more!" suggested Grebeshkov.

"No! . . . I don't want to! Wait. . . wait . . ."

"Drink, do you hear! Drink! I'll kill you if you don't!"

Dikobrazov drank and moaning fell on his pillow. In a minute he got up and Fiodor was convinced that his concoction had taken effect.

"Drink more! It is good for you. Drink! Even if it turns your stomach."

For the comedian now a stage of torture began. Everything in him was practically turned inside out. He jumped and tossed in his bed and watched with unspeakable terror the slow movements of his merciless and untiring enemy who did not leave him alone for a minute but ceaselessly beat him when he refused his concocted medicine. He beat him, made him swallow the concoction, and then pummelled him again. Never at any other time did the poor body of Feniksov-Dikobrazov undergo such treatment and degradation, and never before was the celebrity so weak and defenseless.

At the start the comedian shouted and scolded; later he began to plead and finally having convinced himself that protests led to blows he began to cry. Pochechuev who stood and listened behind the door could not bear it any longer. He broke into the comedian's room.

"Go to the devil!" he said, waving his hands. "Better let the subscription money get lost, let him drink vodka, but don't torment him, for God's sake! He'll die like a dog and you will go to hell! Look, he is almost dead! If I had only known, by God, I would never have gotten myself involved with you. . ."

"That's nothing. You will be grateful, you'll see, just wait. . .!"

"And as for you," said Grebeshkov, turning to the comedian, "You'd better do what I tell you or else you'll get some more!"

Grebeshkov fussed with the comedian till late in the evening. He was tired to say the least. The comedian, however, was completely exhausted. He had not even the strength to moan. His face wore a set expression of terror. After staring fixedly for some time in one direction drowsiness overcame him.

The next day, to the great astonishment of Pochechuev, the come-

dian awoke. Having awakened, he looked about the room with a dull stare, and he began remembering things.

"Why does everything hurt?" he wondered. "As though a train passed over me. Shouldn't I take a drink? Hey, who is there? Bring me some vodka!"

At this moment Pochechuev and Grebeshkov were both standing behind the door.

"He wants vodka, that means he wasn't cured," said the horrified Pochechuev.

"What's the matter with you, Prokl Lvovich?" said the barber with amazement. "Did you think he could be cured in a day? With God's help, he can perhaps be cured in a week, but never in a day. Some of the weak ones can be cured in five days, but this one has the constitution of a merchant. He can't be fixed up that fast."

"Why the hell didn't you tell me that before?" moaned Pochechuev. "And why should I be so cursed? What worse blow could I expect from fate? Wouldn't it be better to put a bullet through my head?"

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In spite of Pochechuev's dark outlook, Dikobrazov, Junior, played in a week's time. The subscription funds did not have to be returned. Grebeshkov was the comedian's make-up man and touched up his face with such reverence that you would have never recognized his former tormentor.

"What tenacity of life!" Pochechuev remarked with amazement. "I almost died just watching his suffering and he . . . as though nothing has happened. He even thanks this devil Fedka and wishes to take him along to Moscow! What wonders in the world!"

## Book Reviews

BELOFF, MAX. *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*. Vol. I, 1929-1936. First published, 1947; re-issued, 1949. 261 pp., including five appendices. \$3.75. Vol. II, 1936-1941. 434 pp.; two appendices, maps, bibliography, 1949. \$5.00. Both volumes published by The Oxford University Press (London and New York) for the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

The strongest impression produced by the reading of Mr. Beloff's two volumes is: "What a tremendous amount of work the man has done!" He has not seen all the published accounts—no man could. But he has used all the major sources which are available including such recent publications as the reports of the Nuremberg trials (published, 1946-48) and *Nazi Soviet-Relations, 1939-1941* (published, 1948). His bibliography lists over three hundred and fifty titles, and many additional books and pamphlets are cited in his very abundant footnotes (which, by the way, are not infrequently more interesting and rewarding than the text).

The range of his research is impressively wide. Standard sources such as national documentary collections, League of Nations' publications, biographies and memoirs, and familiar monographs are used as a matter of course. His bibliography and citations also list many lesser known materials extending from *Sbornik Konsulskikh Dokladov: Severnaya Persia, 1933*. (Collection of Consular Reports on Northern Persia) to technical articles in learned journals, e. g., Allen, "Brit-

ish Policy towards Persia in 1879," *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, 1935. Mr. Beloff, naturally enough, draws heavily upon the *Surveys and Documents on International Affairs* published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs. This is more noticeable in the first than in the second volume.

The catholicity of his approach is also apparent in his use of both pro- and anti-Soviet accounts, such as those of the Coates and the Webbs on one side and those of Kravchenko and Lyons on the other. His careful scholarship is apparent in his use of these, as well as of other materials. Often footnotes succinctly characterize a source as biased or otherwise deficient. One of the few criticisms this reviewer has to offer is that this procedure is followed only now and again. Mr. Beloff, for example, quite properly identifies Pope's biography of Litvinov as uncritical and Isaac's *Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* as giving a Trotskyite version. But he does not indicate the pro-Stalinist slant of Yakhontoff, whom he cites frequently; nor warn of the polemical nature of much of the writings of Schuman and Dallin, to choose contrasting examples. The omission of such information is certainly not due to Mr. Beloff's ignorance of it nor to any intent on his part to mislead. The inclusion of it, however, would have been helpful to the reader.

Maybe I overlooked them among so many riches, but I did not note any reference by Mr. Beloff to the works either of the late Sir Bernard Pares or of Jack Murphy. The latter's biography of Stalin might have



added something to the accounts of the Comintern as might, also, his *New Horizons*. And Sir Bernard's account of Russo-Polish relations either in his familiar text or in his *Russia and the Peace* is at least as good as the work of Sumner to which Mr. Beloff refers his readers. Here and there, other omissions may be noted, but few if any are major and, as noted above, no one man, be he ever so diligent, can hope to see all the material. Mr. Beloff has seen and used a truly amazing quantity and variety. His comment on the matter might very well stand as a motto and warning to the rest of us. "The first point which must be made, and made as forcibly as possible, is that for very much of the history of Soviet foreign policy we still lack the factual information necessary before we can proceed to an analysis of motives. Neglect of this elementary fact, and a willingness to accept instead, at their face value, the contemporary speculations of foreign journalists, diminishes the value of some otherwiser important work on the subject. Nor is the problem adequately faced by those who go to the other extreme and attempt to write the history of Soviet foreign policy solely from the pronouncements of Soviet leaders, and statements in the Soviet press." (II, 385).

The task which the Royal Institute set for Mr. Beloff was "the preparation of a detailed and documented narrative history of Soviet foreign policy." (I, vii). It was decided on various grounds, but mainly on that of greater need, to limit the assignment to the period after 1929. The first volume took the years from 1929 to 1936 as its general chronological limits, but, wisely, these were not rigidly ap-

plied. Some parts of the story were carried beyond that terminal date and others, which opened before then, were postponed to the second volume in order that they might have an unbroken presentation.

Volume I is arranged in three parts of unequal length, opening with a short survey of "The International Position of Soviet Russia in the Autumn of 1929." The second section deals mainly with the years from 1929 to 1933. Its title, "World Depression and the Rise of the Aggressors," indicates what Mr. Beloff considers to be the two major keys to an understanding. He devotes one chapter to discussing the relationship between the First Five-Year Plan and the Soviet's foreign policy. His theme of relationship is undoubtedly sound but he does not wholly succeed in overcoming the difficulties of explaining it. Perhaps no one could. The fact that Soviet trade, both domestic and foreign, is always at the disposal of the Soviet government introduces an element not found in free nations. Mr. Beloff, of course, realizes this but I do not feel that he made the contrast quite as clear as it is. There is a major difference in kind between the relation of the General Electric Company and the U. S. Department of State and between the Soviet government and its electrical industry. This difference vastly complicates the difficulty of discussing the interrelations of trade and foreign affairs. It may be suggested in passing that the use of a few charts or pictograms would have made it much easier for the reader to understand the mass of trade statistics which are presented. The latter, however, are, of course, very useful and important.

The other chapters of this part

deal with Russo-German relations in the days of the Weimar Republic, with the Far East, and with "The U.S.S.R. and the Organs of International Co-operation." The third part ("The Search for Collective Security") covers the years from 1933 to 1936. Mr. Beloff sees "the rebirth of German military might" as "its unifying factor." There were, he writes, three major tasks for Soviet diplomacy, namely: (1) to prevent a German-Japanese combination; (2) "to avert the old bugbear of a general capitalist coalition against the Soviet Union"; and (3) "to avoid or at least delay the struggle with Germany." (I, 90-91). Individual chapters of varying lengths deal with specific topics, e.g., Russo-German relations, Russo-American relations, security pacts, the Red Army, the Comintern, and so on. It would extend this review unduly to attempt any detailed criticism and, anyway, many of these things are matters of opinion. But it seems to me that Mr. Beloff overemphasizes trade as a cause for American recognition of Russia, and that he slightly underemphasizes the increased control of the Russian Communist Party over the 1935 Comintern Congress as compared to the earlier Congresses. Four of the five appendices to this volume deal with the Far East, including the Chinese Revolution, Sinkiang, and Mongolia. The fifth treats of "The U.S.S.R. and International Organization."

The second volume is also arranged in three unequal parts. The first and longest is titled, "The Breakdown of Collective Security"; the second, "The Soviet Union and 'The Second Imperialist War'"; and the third, which is very brief comparatively, is an excellent essay on "The Principles of Soviet Foreign

Policy." In this last connection, although not confined to that section, Mr. Beloff makes skillful and telling use of Potemkin's, *Istoriya diplomatii*. Not, as Mr. Beloff correctly observes, that this Soviet work contains any revelations of "secret" diplomacy, but it does give an authoritative summary of the Soviet viewpoint on foreign policy, and supplements the explicit statement by the way in which it uses and arranges the materials.

From 1933 to 1936, writes Mr. Beloff, the Soviets had sought to build a co-operative system of collective security (II, I). Between 1936 and 1938, this system collapsed and the Soviets retreated into isolationism. "There is something of a paradox in the fact that they were also the years in which the theory of collective security was most passionately expounded by Soviet spokesmen. . . . The failure to make a reality of the new policy must be ascribed to a combination of causes, not all of them within Soviet power to control. . . . The collapse of the European system of security . . . cannot be dealt with merely as a series of diplomatic blunders." (II, 26-7).

Having thus closed to himself the easy and misleading path too often trod by writers on this subject, Mr. Beloff then proceeds to a painstakingly careful examination of the detailed evidence. The Spanish Civil War; Turkey and the Straits; the Far East; and the Middle East are each given a separate chapter. The general story of "Soviet Diplomacy in Europe" from the reoccupation of the Rhineland to Munich is told in four additional chapters. Five further chapters (making up the middle part of the book) cover the events from Munich to June,

1941. As in the case of the first volume, limitations of available space prohibit any attempt at a detailed critical review. Suffice it to say that spot checks in those few sections where I am competent to judge, corroborate the impression of Mr. Beloff's careful scholarship. His awareness of the complete control exercised over the various CPs by the CPSU(B) and of the relation of this to international affairs may be singled out for special praise. But so might many other merits. And, of course, there will always be honest differences of opinion over relative emphases.

*The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia* is not easy reading. It requires concentrated and extended effort. In fact, it must be studied rather than read. To a certain extent, this is not only inevitable but also desirable. So important and so complicated a story merits lengthy and studious consideration. Perhaps fewer persons would be duped by oversimplified interpretations and panaceas if they had any understanding of the complexities involved in relations between nations. Let the omniscient columnists and commentators continue to present their pre-digested capsules. The student needs something more and Mr. Beloff has supplied it. Nevertheless, I wonder if he could not have eased the reader's task a little by a somewhat different arrangement. Perhaps not. But on a page randomly chosen by opening the book (II, 195) one finds the following succession of dates and events: Neutrality Act of 1 May 1937; trade agreement of 1935; renewed on 11 July 1936; in August 1936 choice of Davies as Ambassador; Davies' arrival on 18 January 1937; meeting of 5 February; further discussion on 19 Feb-

ruary. The page immediately preceding (and part of the same chapter though dealing with a different subject) has six dates in the text, all in the years 1938 and 1939; and six in the footnotes, ranging from 1928 to 1946. I submit that this puts an undue burden on even the most willing and industrious reader. The confusion inherent in a complex story is confounded by this way of telling it. Mr. Beloff's style in his concluding essay on the principles of Soviet policy is, in contrast, beautifully lucid, direct, and eminently readable.

Both Mr. Beloff and his sponsors point out that this is a pioneer study and that, in the nature of things, it cannot be and does not pretend to be definitive. It will, however, serve more than adequately, until time and the affairs of men may make possible a definitive work. As a work of reference it will be an indispensable tool for the serious student, but, unfortunately, few are likely to read it for pleasure.

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FISCHER, RUTH. *Stalin and German Communism; A Study in the Origins of the State Party*. With a preface by Sidney B. Fay. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 1948. 633 pp. \$8.00.

Ruth Fischer was an outstanding leader of the German Communist Party until 1929. For four years a member of the Reichstag and its Committee on Foreign Affairs, she was also a German delegate to the Comintern Congresses and—from 1924 to 1926—a member of the Comintern Praesidium. Innumer-

able trips to Moscow for the important Comintern conclaves enabled her to meet Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Radek, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Kamenev, and many other Bolshevik leaders, as well as the heads of Communist parties throughout the world. During Stalin's fight with the so-called "Left Opposition" of Trotsky and Zinoviev, she took an active part in the struggle, siding with the opposition.

Miss Fischer's title is misleading, since Stalin appears only in the later chapters. Reviewing the events in Germany and Russia between 1918 and 1930, her book is not really a history, but combines her personal reminiscences with an account of European history through the perspective of Communist activities during that period.

Ruth Fischer's personal experiences are of considerable interest not only to the historian, but to all who want to know how the present Russian dictatorship came into being and who want to understand the patterns and techniques of Russia's present expansion. Her story sheds valuable light on many events in Germany and Russia that hitherto have not been clear even to active Communists.

For example, the rôle of Karl Radek in Germany during the nineteen-twenties is considerably illuminated. Arrested by German authorities for being one of the instigators of the Communist uprising against the German Republic and confined in the Moabite Prison in Berlin, Radek from his cell directed the activities of the German Communist Party, at the same time negotiating, in the name of the Soviet Government, with representatives of the German Nationalists,

big industrialists, and members of the German General Staff, for a Soviet-German alliance against the Western powers.

Miss Fischer relates her surprise at being invited by Radek to visit him in prison through a man in close contact with the German General Staff. A General Staff officer gave her a pass which enabled her to visit Radek's cell three times a week.

"This prison cell," she writes, "became for me a classroom where I got my lessons in advanced Communism." Radek, she relates, "received an amazing number of visitors three times a week." In addition to all the leaders and many active members of the German Communist Party, "Ludendorff's adjutant, Colonel Bauer, visited him regularly, as did not only other officers, but also big industrialists."

The student of Soviet Russia's relations with German reactionary nationalists and militarists will find abundant and revealing material in Ruth Fischer's book. It becomes clear that the groundwork for the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939 was actually laid in the '20's by Radek and others, and later in the close collaboration between the Soviet government and the Reichswehr.

Miss Fischer's narrative of the struggle for power in Russia between Stalin and the Left Opposition is highly personal, but nevertheless contains many important and hitherto unknown details. Many of those who have learned the history of German and world Communism from Communist and fellow-traveler sources will be surprised to read in Ruth Fischer's book that Rosa Luxembourg considered Lenin "a potentially dangerous fanatic," that she was "in basic disagreement with Lenin on every major question, and

that her cooperation with him after her release from prison was undoubtedly the result of pressure on her from her own organization." Miss Fischer marshals impressive evidence to substantiate this.

The over-all history in this book is, to a great extent, disappointing. Though Miss Fischer has long ago lost her revolutionary illusions and strives for objectivity, she very often fails to maintain an objective tone in describing the events in Germany from 1918 to 1929 and the rôle played in these events by various parties, factions, and personalities. Her analysis of the events of that period often gives the impression that Miss Fischer still believes the Communist Revolution would have been victorious in Germany, if the Left Opposition led by her and her close friend and associate, Arkady Maslow, had remained at the helm of the Party. Her fundamental thesis, that Stalin betrayed Leninism and "spoiled" the beautiful and noble October Revolution, is thoroughly unsound. Her attempt to distinguish sharply between Lenin's party and policies and those of Stalin can not be taken seriously by those familiar with the history of Bolshevism. The State Party was created by Lenin, and he and his associates laid the foundation of the present Soviet terrorist dictatorship. Stalin was one of those associates. While it is a fair conjecture to assume that Trotsky or Zinoviev in Stalin's place would not liquidate all the old Bolsheviks, there is absolutely no ground for the hypothesis that Trotsky or Zinoviev on the Kremlin throne might extend any freedom to the Russian people, or abandon the Bolshevik tactics of terror and oppression. With all his minor deviations and

improvisations, Stalin was always, and is to this day, a true Bolshevik.

Ruth Fischer has accumulated an enormous amount of material for this book. She has used many pamphlets, convention reports, memoirs, etc., that are currently unavailable. But the mass of material is weakly organized. There are all too many unnecessary details about the fights between various German Communist factions that are of trifling historic value, and tend to confuse the reader.

There are also many shocking inaccuracies, and a good number of statements unsubstantiated by fact. To note just a few:

On page 26, Miss Fischer quotes Lenin as saying "Russian socialists who failed to demand freedom of secession for Finland, Poland, the Ukraine, etc., are behaving like chauvinists, like lackeys of the blood- and mud-stained imperialist monarchies and imperialist bourgeoisie." She does not mention, however, that Lenin wrote these words before he came to power. Later, Lenin's government not only prevented the Ukraine from seceding and sent the Red Army to reconquer independent Georgia, but also attempted to destroy the independence of Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Miss Fischer's chapter "Brest-Litovsk" is based almost exclusively on Bolshevik sources and is full of inaccuracies and mis-statements. For one, she repeatedly confuses the Socialist Revolutionary Party—continuously opposed to the Bolsheviks—and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, a pro-Communist group that seceded from the Socialist Revolutionary Party and for the first six months of the Bolshevik Revolution closely collaborated with

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the Bolsheviks. Thus she says it was the SR's who shot Count Mirbach, the German ambassador in Moscow, when it was the Left SR's. On the other hand, Dora or Fanya Kaplan, who shot and wounded Lenin, was not a Left SR—as Miss Fischer writes—but a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Later on, Miss Fischer tells us the leaders of the Left SR group were tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal in 1922 and sentenced to long prison terms. The defendants in that trial were members of the Central Committee of the SR Party—Gotz, Timofeev, Eugenia Ratner and others—and were sentenced to death. The death sentence was later commuted, and the SR leaders were held as permanent hostages, to be shot immediately in the event of any overt act on the part of a Socialist Revolutionary against the Soviet leaders. The condemned SR leaders thus remained in prison until executed by Stalin more than a decade later.

Moreover, the Red Terror did not begin after Fanya Kaplan's attempt on Lenin's life, as Miss Fischer maintains, but immediately after the Bolsheviks came to power. The Mensheviks never cooperated with the Soviet government, as Miss Fischer seems to think. On page 44, she quotes without comment from the Big Soviet Encyclopedia the N.K.V.D. myth that Trotsky, Bukharin, and the other "conspirators" intended in 1918 to arrest and kill Lenin, Stalin, and Sverdlov and restore capitalism in Russia. Miss Fischer thus leaves the impression that this fabrication is historic truth. Her story of the uprising in Georgia in 1924 is likewise the

straight, unadorned official G.P.U. version. In describing Mussolini's rise to power, she fails to indicate the very important rôle played by Moscow and the Italian communist Party in undermining the democratic régime and preparing the ground for the Fascist victory. The main speech against Zinoviev and Bolshevism at the Halle Congress of the German Independent Socialists in 1920 was not delivered by Abramovich, as Miss Fischer says, but by Martov; Abramovich did not participate at all in the debates of the Halle Congress. On page 179, she quotes Soviet General Kotikov, who accused Dr. Ernst Reuter, the present Social Democratic mayor of Berlin, of having "a pretty dark and dubious record in Turkey." She also, without comment, quotes Kotikov as saying Franz von Papen considered Reuter "useful for Hitler Germany." Miss Fischer thus unwittingly treats a familiar Cominform lie as an historic fact. Miss Fischer maintains that Lenin, Trotsky, and Zinoviev used the Cheka only against the old ruling classes, when in fact it was used also against workers, peasants, and the socialist and liberal intelligentsia who for decades had struggled for freedom, democracy, and social justice in Russia.

Many of Ruth Fischer's facts and sources have to be carefully checked. But with all its shortcomings and mistakes, *Stalin and German Communism* is a very important contribution to the history of the Soviet totalitarian dictatorship and of world Communism.

DAVID SHUB

New York City

BERDYAEV, N. *The Russian Idea*. New York, Macmillan, 1948. 255 pp. \$2.75.

It is not easy to characterize this book of the late great religious philosopher and interpreter of Russian history of ideas. By the Russian Idea he means a general view of Russian development not taken from empirical observation, but corresponding to "the thought of the Creator." That raises at once the objection: can men know God's idea of a nation? Does not Berdyaev attempt too much, and does not his *Russian Idea* conceal a highly subjective and selective approach to the history and the representatives of his people? But it would be wrong to judge this book exclusively by the aims of its author. It will prove very helpful even for those who will regard Berdyaev's metaphysical ideas as somewhat too vague and confused. Berdyaev gives a brilliant survey of the history of the Russian educated groups, particularly of the revolutionary intelligentsia which arose in the nineteenth century. What is Russia's mission? Has Russia to defend a tradition of her own, a Christian-Orthodox tradition opposed to Western rationalism and utilitarianism, or must Russia simply take over Western radical ideas and realize them while they are not taken seriously as guides to practice in the countries of their origin?

Berdyaev's book is not too well organized; there are constant repetitions. These, however, are more than counterbalanced by penetrating, very profound characterizations, not only of general developments and trends, but also of great representatives of Russian philosophical, social, and religious thought; of such men as Khomyakov and Chernyshevsky, Vladimir Solo-

view, and Rozanov. There are unforgettable pages about well-known and very little known figures—little known even among Russians—about Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, about Bukharev and Archbishop Innokenty. Introductory chapters give an excellent survey of the character of Russian history as a series of catastrophes, and particularly of the traditions upon which the Tsarist régime was based. It is unfortunate that the book has been very poorly edited: there is neither a table of contents nor an index. The books quoted by Berdyaev are insufficiently identified—it is typical that the same book of Florovsky is quoted under various titles. There are regrettable misspellings, e.g., Wermeil for Vermeil.

But these technical defects do not detract much from the stimulating effect which the book must exercise on its readers. After all, Berdyaev himself was one of the greatest representatives of the Russian intelligentsia, which experienced in the years immediately preceding the victory of Bolshevism an astonishing intellectual blossoming. His view on the Russian character is most important as a testimony of the thoughts of a leading Russian thinker. For Berdyaev, Russian thought oscillates between extremes; bourgeois mediocrity and flat utilitarianism are alien to it. Even utilitarianism assumes, if taken over by Russians, an idealistic-religious tinge as the brilliant pages on Chernyshevsky show. Russian thought is not abstract-philosophical, but interested in concrete men and society; ethics are central, not metaphysics. Russian nihilism and atheism are also forms of religious beliefs. Russian thought is eschatological, it is not satisfied with the

present, sees everything under the perspective of the future, in which the Kingdom of God, or—for the atheistic socialists—the classless society, will be realized. There is on the one side, anarchism, as rejection of any order and imposed laws, and on the other side a limitless obedience and submissive acceptance of existing authorities.

The book of Berdyaev must be regarded as a profound and original summary of widely held views on the Russian character and particularly on the various types of the Russian intelligentsia. What is needed in the future are more detailed and more empirical studies. A future history of the Russian intelligentsia and Russian thought ought also to consider, more than occasionally (as Berdyaev himself does), the so-called real factors: the influence of political situations and of the social background of the various representative figures and groups. Even for the specialist, Berdyaev's book will have a great value—he will be able to appreciate it highly for its general insight as well as for many details, at the same time realizing the problematic nature of some sweeping statements and the limits of Berdyaev's religious nationalism, which ascribes a unique spiritual mission to the Russian people.

WALDEMAR GURIAN

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GUDZY, N. K. *History of Early Russian Literature*. Translated from the second Russian edition by Susan Wilbur Jones. Introduction by Gleb Struve. New York, Macmillan, 1949. 545 pp. \$10.00.

As pointed out in the *Foreword*, the Russian Translation Project of

the American Council of Learned Societies was organized in 1944 with the aid of a subsidy from the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation. In the difficult problem of the selection of books for translation, the Administrative Committee has had the counsel and cooperation of Slavic scholars throughout the United States and Great Britain.

This book is one of these selections, published by the Macmillan Company cooperating with A.C.L.S. The purpose of the project is to make available to the American public the best and most representative volumes of contemporary Russian writing in the humanities and social sciences.

Regarding the present study, it is impossible in a brief review to do full justice to this monumental work. N. K. Gudzy, born in 1887, is one of the most distinguished literary scholars in the Soviet Union. He is a graduate of Kiev University, has been a lecturer at the Moscow State University, at Kiev University, and is now Professor of Literature at the Second Moscow State University. His approach to his task is in keeping with the best traditions of pre-revolutionary Russian scholarship, which is to say that it is thoroughly scholarly, despite the fact that, owing to the peculiar circumstances under which Soviet scholars are forced to do their work, he finds it necessary at times to draw upon such "authorities" in the field of Russian literary history as Marx, Engels, Lenin, and, of course, Stalin.

The literary monuments discussed in the book include the most notable specimens from the beginning of the eleventh century to the end of the seventeenth. As stated in "Author's Note," "the selection

of the material subjected to study is determined—although there are specifically literary elements present in it—chiefly by the degree in which it reflects essential features of historical reality." It is, of course, the only sensible approach, since practically all the earlier monuments of literature in Russia had quite non-literary, chiefly ecclesiastical, purposes; they were, so to speak, *literatura ponevole* (literature despite itself). Quite correctly, the author ends his study with the end of the seventeenth century, that is, with the beginning of the reign of Peter I, when the period of what is generally regarded as modern Russian literature is ushered in.

The scope of the work is tremendous. Here is a mere enumeration of topics: Translated Literature of the Kiev Period; Original Literature of the Kiev Period, including the all-important *Slovo o Polku Igoreve* (which is translated in the present volume as *The Tale of Igor's Expedition*); then the treatment of regional literature of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the development of regional literature from the end of the fourteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century; Muscovite literature, Novgorod literature, literature of Pskov, literature of Tver, literature of Smolensk, literature of Murom-Ryazan; literature of Russia as a whole in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This includes polemical literature of the sixteenth century such as works of Ivan Peresvetov, Andrei Kurbsky, and Ivan the Terrible; from the seventeenth century, it includes the works of Archpriest Avvakum. In addition to all these, there are the following topics discussed in the book: translations from Western narrative lit-

erature; influence of the East (featuring the *Tale of Yeruslan Lazarevich* which, in the nineteenth century, served as a model for Pushkin's *Ruslan and Ludmila*); original Russian historical and genre narrative; satirical literature of the seventeenth century, including the famous *Tale of Shemyakin Sud*; versification in the seventeenth century; and the beginning of the Russian theater and Russian dramaturgy.

Good and adequate summaries, and copious direct quotations, as well as sound critical analysis, give a more than sufficient idea to the reader of the virtues and shortcomings of the early Russian literature.

Professor Struve's introduction, albeit extremely brief (barely five pages), is competent and to the point.

The translation is passable, though, euphemistically speaking, it frequently fails to scale the heights of perfection. A few examples of erroneous or clumsy translation follow:

1. On p. 2, there is a somewhat puzzling footnote: O. L. Feurbach. K. Marx and F. Engels, "Arkhib Marksa i Engelsa." Turning to a copy of the original, we discover that what the translator has mistaken for "O. L. Feurbach" is the Russian title *O L. Feierbakhe*, i.e. "About L. Feuerbach", and K. Marx and F. Engels are the authors (not the subject) of reference.

2. On p. 5, "feodal'naya razdrobennost'" (feudal parcelling) is translated as "breaking up of Feudalism," which gives an entirely wrong impression since the epoch under discussion precedes by several centuries that of the break-up of Feudalism in Russia.

3. On the same page, "oblastnoe razvitie russkoi literatury" is translated as "provincial development of Russian literature," when it should be "regional development. . .," a term which is quite familiar to American readers.

4. On p. 7, "feodalnykh verkhov" is translated as "of feudal heads," which is much less acceptable than "of feudal élite."

5. On p. 14, "o нравstvennoi i religioznoi vysote starorusskovo dukhovnoy vkladu" is translated as "concerning the moral and religious elevation of Old Russian spiritual practice." (I am not sure I understand what it means, thus "translated"). It should be rendered as "concerning the moral and religious eminence of Old Russian spiritual order of things."

6. On p. 35, "voprosy o koncheykh sudbakh mira," i.e., "questions about the ultimate fate of the world" is translated rather abruptly and irrevocably as "questions relating to the end of the world."

Throughout the book, the expression "v chastnosti"—which in practically every case should be rendered as "specifically"—is invariably translated as "particularly" or "in particular," giving a wrong emphasis.

The price of the volume (\$10) is too high when one considers that the publication is aimed at the general reader and undergraduate student (the specialists in the field and more serious students of the subject will not be satisfied with a translation—even if it were better—and will seek the original.)

J. A. POSIN

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KUZMINSKAYA, TATYANA A. *Tolstoy as I Knew Him*. New York, Macmillan. 1948. 439 pp. \$5.00

BRUFORD, W. H. *Chekhov and His Russia*. New York, Oxford. 1948. 233 pp. \$4.25.

HOLTZMAN, FILIA. *The Young Maxim Gorky: 1868-1902*. New York, Columbia University Press. 1948. 256 pp. \$3.00.

It is well known to students of Tolstoy that the characters of his novels were frankly modeled on people he knew, and that the original of his Natasha Rostova was his sister-in-law, Tatyana Bers. Now, Tatyana's memoirs, first published in Russian in 1926, shortly after her death, have been translated into English. They are an extraordinarily interesting document, for it is not often that a great heroine of fiction steps out of the pages in which she has been immortalized to draw a self-portrait and tell how her story came to be written.

Tatyana was ten when Lev Tolstoy first visited her home—the Tols-toys had long been friends of the family—and sixteen when he married her sister Sonya in 1862. For the rest of her life, even after her marriage to Alexander Kuzminsky, she spent much time at Yasnaya Polyana. It was at Yasnaya she died, and there that she wrote her memoirs. In fact, the Russian title of her book, used as a subtitle in the present translation, is "My Life at Home and at Yasnaya Polyana." She was over seventy, and both her husband and Lev Nikolaevich were dead, when, with the help of old letters and diaries, and on the very place where the events she was recording had taken place, she began to write her reminiscences. She did not live to finish them; her book breaks off abruptly at 1868, with an



account of household arrangements during the first year of her marriage. "The cook was from Tula" are the last words, striking, through grim accident, a note which, in its earthy commonplaceness and its very incompleteness, would have charmed Tolstoy. For here indeed, in spite of the death of his heroine, in spite of all changes, whether of cooks, diets, or political régimes, was the promise of endless dinners prepared for an unending succession of human beings.

Her artless chronicle records the very years in which *War and Peace* was written—when she was, so to speak, sitting for her portrait—did she think she was staying at Yasnaya all for nothing? Lev Nikolaevich would remark—and corroborates in many ways the lesson of ultimate simplicity which Tolstoy always preached. Tatyana Kuzminskaya was neither thinker nor artist; no more was Natasha Rostova. Had she been, Tolstoy could not have loved her as he did. And the self-revelation of both her story and of her narrative method affords, by way of comparison with Tolstoy's version, a rare glimpse into a great artist's transformation of his material. For here she is—the gay, unaffected, childlike, sympathetic, loving girl, pampered, capricious, volatile, and yet firm in her decisions and, on the whole, sensible in her judgments; but fascinating only thanks to Tolstoy's portrait of her, without which she might seem ordinary, if not dull, in these school-girlish, zestful pages. The man of genius, however, had been fond of her; and there was no one, she knew, who understood her as well as he, and no one whom she more eagerly consulted or more readily obeyed. She saw him as a friend—not a god

—and her intimate, appreciative memoirs yield, therefore, one of the most engaging sketches we have of him.

On his part, his feeling is best shown, perhaps, in the central episode of her tale, a love story which differs in some important respects from Natasha's. In *War and Peace* Natasha breaks off her engagement with Prince Andrey when she becomes infatuated with Anatole Kuragin; then, hearing that he is already married, overcome by shame and remorse, she tries to poison herself. Tatyana's story was more complicated. Her "affair" with Anatole—he did actually exist and his name was Anatoly Shostak—was ephemeral; and she took poison not on his account, but because of another man, Tolstoy's brother Sergey, with whom she was deeply in love, and who wished to marry her but found, after a struggle, that it was morally and socially impossible for him to abandon the gypsy with whom he had been living for fifteen years and by whom he had had several children. "It's time, high time to finish the story of my romance with Sergey Nikolaevich," records Tatyana Kuzminskaya some sixty years later. "To write of it even now is a severe emotional strain." When Tatyana was ill, in the days that followed the breaking of their engagement, Tolstoy wrote her letters of great sensitivity and tenderness. He alone, with his knowledge of love, could appreciate fully all that this loss had cost her. But what is especially interesting from the point of view of his art is the way he simplified the original situation when he made use of it in his novel, eliminating the psychological complexities involved in the emotional and moral tangle of this

unequal, sensual union, with its resulting tragic retribution. It was not, one gathers from Tatyana Andreevna's story, the problem of justice that was the issue here; for Tolstoy, as well as for Tatyana's parents, the question at stake was, primarily, one of emotional involvement: if Sergey Nikolaevich was still attached to his Masha—as he seemed to be—he must not, of course, ally himself with Tanya. The theme was one which fascinated Tolstoy, but his repeated use of it is always simpler than this episode in Tatyana's life. May one see in this, perhaps, an instructive example of Tolstoy's treatment of reality, and maybe also an instance of the kind that caused him to point out so persistently that man was incapable of comprehending fully the infinitely complex nature of human events?

Chekhov's brief sketches, stories, plays are so numerous and so many-sided, and his despair of finding a central meaning or a goal in life is so movingly reiterated, that it is easy to accept him as an author of fragments. But Professor Bruford's patient study shows how unified, in spite of his dissatisfaction with his "impressionism," his work actually is, how much his apparent lack of integration was due not to any limitation, but, on the contrary, to his quiet, honest wisdom. This book gives, through an analysis of Chekhov's productions, a complete picture of his Russia: its geography, climate, methods of agriculture and industry, the modes of living and the ways of thinking of its people. We see here the superstitious ignorance, the primitive concepts of the peasantry; the improvidence and the apathy of the landowners, and the appalling difference between their

notions of personal ethics and those of the muzhiks; the snobbery, toadying, and pettiness of the official class, with their habit of surrounding "thought with a palisade of irony," the "soulless routine" of their new courts; the submissiveness inculcated by the Church to echo that demanded by the Tsar; among the intelligentsia, the drying up of human feeling through a pedantic application to science, a "utilitarian view of culture," and a cultivation of a sense of guilt with regard to the "people"; the drabness and philistinism of townsmen. It is a dismal picture of crudity and frustration, which is borne out by the opinions of historians whom Professor Bruford quotes in substantiation of Chekhov's analysis.

All of this, of course, is hardly new; but what is new is the fullness of examples given here and, through them, the convincing demonstration that the celebrated "Chekhovian mood" was the result not of a characteristically Russian predisposition to melancholy, but of an uncompromising criticism of society. In a last chapter, on "Chekhov's Values," this deduction is admirably discussed and summarized. There was "nothing specifically Russian" in the primary ideals of "Christian respect for personality and love of one's neighbor. . . in the light of which Chekhov wrote his satirical sketches of the intelligentsia"; and in his advocacy of every day deencies: cleanliness, hygiene, restraint of sexual impulses, he was opposed to the "Asiaticism" of his land, as he called it, and was "more Western than Russian." His work, says Professor Bruford, might be considered a study of social types but over and above his objectivity, there was also in Chekhov the

despair of the nineteenth century intellectual, who respected science but found it inadequate in the realm of human aspirations, and was "filled with that post-Christian nostalgia for faith; so common since Romantic times." In his Preface, Professor Bruford defended his undertaking. Without implying that Chekhov's greatest merit was that of documentation, he would use him, he said, as "a quarry for historical material," with the aim of seeing "Russia through Chekhov's eyes and . . . Chekhov as the product of a particular age and country." Though one may feel at the outset, that such an approach does require justification, one is bound to admit that by the end of the study it has been very happily vindicated.

Filia Holtzman's little book does not go very far in its analysis of Gorky, the man who is, without question, one of the most curious figures of modern times, and in its comments on his work is, it seems to me, for the most part naive. But it is an honest and useful compilation of sources relative to his early life.

The philosophic positions represented by the subjects of these three books display a progression which symbolizes fundamental changes in the intellectual climate of Russia in the last seventy or eighty years. Chekhov, despite his admiration of Tolstoy, soon grew impatient with his romantic view of man; and Gorky, despite his reverence for Chekhov, rebelled against his melancholy picture of life. But these books are not systematic studies of ideas. None of them, strictly speaking, is either a biography or an essay in criticism; and they were written in such different ways and for such different pur-

poses that they are hardly comparable. Yet, in a peculiar way, each one seems somehow appropriate to its subject: the personal memoir for the great nineteenth century novelist, who saw all life in terms of individual solutions; the scientific analysis for the artist in an age of transition, who wrote of humanity with a doctor's sympathy and a scientist's humility; and the accumulation, and usable arrangement of pertinent data for the author of a new era, about whom it is probably too soon, as yet, to pass final judgment.

HELEN MUCHNIC

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KUNITZ, JOSHUA (ED.). *Russian Literature Since the Revolution*. New York, Boni and Gaer, 1948. 932 pp.

Far better than the formal title, the dust-jacket supplied with this volume reveals the editor's real aim in producing this anthology. Thereon the work is fairly described as "Soviet Literature selected and arranged to give a comprehensive and revealing picture of life in the Soviet Union." Thus the wary purchaser is at least forewarned that he may expect both a partial and a strongly biased selection of materials designedly chosen and interpreted to engage his sympathies and stimulate his consent. Dr. Kunitz has made the most of the editorial privilege to select those materials which best serve his avowed purpose to "provide a wealth of authentic information in the face of which no objective reader could long cherish myths of a Russian riddle and an iron curtain." He disavows any con-

cern with literary quality, or with literary criticism. His interpretation of his subject fails to throw any light whatsoever on the peculiar circumstances under which Soviet authors are compelled to write nor does he anywhere attempt an evaluation of the first principles which underlie the literary works he reproduces.

We are justified, therefore, in assuming that Dr. Kunitz accepts uncritically the values which motivate the Soviet writer, that he is unaware of the omission of any significant human values in their product and that he really believes what he has written in his Introduction: "As long as Soviet citizens sing, paint, act, compose and write literature for all the world to hear, see and read, nothing can obscure their unfolding spirit, nothing can hide their most intimate feelings and thoughts, nothing except bias can prevent the world's communion with them." With all the facts before him, a *connoisseur* less fervent than Dr. Kunitz will doubtless conclude that this panegyric offers a perfect example of wistful thinking. After all, Gorky himself (as Dr. Kunitz has noted) was content to propose as the goal of the Soviet writer that he should strive "truthfully to mirror *external* life" and eschew the bourgeois *penchant* for revealing his most intimate feelings and thoughts. On the evidence supplied by Dr. Kunitz the objective-minded reader will probably incline to the belief that Gorky's admonition has been pretty generally followed by Soviet authors since 1932, at least, and he will doubtless deplore the absence of that intimate communion with the Soviet people which only a "free" literature could provide.

Dr. Kunitz has organized his selections chronologically under four captions, following the now customary historical terminology: War Time Communism, 1917-21; New Economic Policy, 1921-28; Industrialization and Collectivization, the Five-Year Plans, 1928-41; War and the Post-War Period, 1941-1948. In a far too brief foreword to each section, he provides the minimum essentials for the readers' historical and economic orientation; political determinants are largely overlooked. Here the editor displays his competent knowledge of his subject as well as the conceptions which underlie his scholarship. At the end of the book he gives a brief biographical sketch of each author from whose works he has chosen his selections and, finally, a very useful "Selective Guide to Modern Russian Literature in English Translation, 1880-1947." With the exception of a few short poems, all the material has been previously published in English. The quality of the translations, derived from many different sources, varies considerably; in general, it is excellent.

By printing in full such voluminous novels as Fadeev's *Nineteen*, Kataev's *Embezzlers*, Sholokhov's *Seeds of Tomorrow*, and Krimov's *Tanker Derbent*—totalling in all 545 pages—the editor has greatly restricted the spread of his other selections, and many authors of equal rank are altogether absent. For example: Gladkov's *Cement* is allowed less than three pages; Mayakovsky is represented by "Left March" and "My Soviet Passport"; Zoshchenko by "Gold Teeth," and Ehrenburg by only six pages. Among the more notably absent are Pasternak, Fedin, Sergeev-Tsensky, Zamiatin, Panferov, Pilnyak

and Olyosha. These important and significant omissions are hardly compensated for by the inclusion of such secondary figures as Shishkov, Neverov, Golodny, Ovechkin, Shchipachev, Dovzhenko, Kassil, Naghibin and Paustovsky. Perhaps the key to the editor's scale of literary values is explained in the dust-jacket, where we read: "This book is not only an anthology of Soviet literature; it is also a panoramic social study of the U.S.S.R. as revealed by Russia's best social students—its novelists, short story writers and its poets."

Certainly this volume can not be seriously considered a satisfactory anthology of Soviet letters. It is rather a partial and tendentious presentation of a subject that begs for honest and objective exploration. As a convenient compendium of materials hitherto not available in a single volume, it will be of service to the competently critical. Dr. Kunitz leaves the field wide open to the proficient scholar who can approach it without prejudice of politics and without an axe to grind.

ALBERT D. MENUT

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*Literaturnaya entsyklopediya. Kommunisticheskaya Akademiya* (Literary Encyclopedia. Communist Academy). Moscow, 1929-1939. Russian Reprint Series of the A. C. L. S. Published by J. W. Edwards, Ann Arbor, Michigan. 1948-1949. 10 vols. (Vols. 1-9, 11). Illustrated. \$50.00.

This Literary Encyclopedia is another item in the series of "fundamental Russian books" issued by

the Russian Reprint Program of the American Council of Learned Societies. As a reference work, it will undoubtedly be of value in American colleges and universities where courses on Russian literature and civilization are taught. The founder of this vast enterprise and its Editor-in-Chief, until his death in 1933, was A. V. Lunacharsky, Commissar for Education, writer, and playwright.

In scope, purpose, and general approach to literary phenomena, this Encyclopedia presents many features that are quite unusual when compared to works of similar nature in Western Europe and America. Some of these peculiarities will be briefly set down here.

In the preface to the first volume, the editors state that literature "is to be subjected to a basic re-examination along Marxist lines." This means, first of all, that literature is conceived by the editors as a new science. The Soviet term "literaturovedenie," used throughout the Encyclopedia, has no equivalent in English; it means, freely translated "all knowledge pertaining to literature." The *Literaturnaya entsiklopediya* treats, therefore, such varied subjects as: literary history and theory, criticism, methodology, linguistics, esthetics, mythology, as well as the various aspects of "literary life"; i.e., literary schools and movements, salons, periodicals, publishing, copyright laws, etc.

Based on the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, the Marxist "science" of literature is, according to the editors, a young science, dating only from the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. Its methods are still in the process of being fully worked out. The plan of the editors is, first of all, to re-



examine, from the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, "the history of world literature of all centuries"; secondly, to give "a complete picture of contemporary literature in connection with the great socio-political upheavals of our time."

The preface to Volume I states that the Russian Bolshevik revolution brought forth new factors in world culture: the masses of workers are beginning to participate actively in literary activity for the first time in history, new nationalities within the U.S.S.R. have been born, the cultural life of colonial peoples is assuming a new worldwide significance. These new phenomena are treated extensively in the Encyclopedia. An outstanding feature of the work is, in fact, the extensive treatment accorded to Asiatic literatures, and, more especially to the languages and literatures of the Kalmyks, the Kirghiz, the Kazakhs, the Georgians, the Armenians, and other nationalities comprised within the Soviet Union.

The bulk of the Encyclopedia is, naturally, devoted to Russian, pre-revolutionary and Soviet literatures. The major figures of the nineteenth century Russian literature are extensively and well represented. It may surprise the American student that, once the required homage to Marx and Lenin is paid, the evaluation of most of the Russian classics is, on the whole, quite fair and does not materially differ from the consensus of pre-revolutionary critical opinion. "The heritage of Russian classics," states the article on Pushkin, "is critically accepted by the revolutionary proletariat." There are, of course, exceptions. Among the major nineteenth century figures, Dostoevsky seems to be

the chief victim of Soviet-Marxist criticism. The article on him is short, highly critical, and the author arrives at the following paradoxical conclusion: "Contemporary Marxist criticism sees in Dostoevsky a rebel gravitating toward humility, a mystic gravitating toward rebellion, a revolutionary gravitating toward reaction, a reactionary gravitating toward revolution."

A valuable feature of the articles on Russian classics is that scholarly works on them, in Russian and foreign languages, are brought up to date or nearly so. In addition, the influence of Russian classics upon European writers is systematically re-examined. It is also to be noted that most of the anti-Soviet, émigré writers, are included, although the treatment of them is often perfunctory.

To American students of Russian literature, articles devoted to Soviet literature would probably be of special interest. Such general articles as "Proletarian Socialist Literature," "Methods of Pre-Marxist Literature," and "Menshevism in Literature," are particularly important since they expound the official tenets of the Marxist-Leninist approach to literature. Individual Soviet writers are very extensively treated, including some of those figures who have long since been purged. Also, in general, the treatment of contemporary Soviet writers seems more sharply polemical in tone than that of the classics. Frequently, one finds such observations as the following: "Although [X.] participated in Socialist Construction, he had frequently deviated from the Party line," or "recognizing his ideological errors, [Y.] had finally admitted them and corrected his work. . . ."

As far as the classics of Western European literature are concerned, they are treated, by and large, as extensively and competently as in any of the best of Western European encyclopedias—with one reservation, however. To a non-Marxist, judgments of European classics such, for example, as the one on Balzac, whose work, it is stated, "reflects the triumph of that section of the bourgeoisie which was beginning to adapt itself to a new stage in capitalistic development—finance capitalism. . ."—are not very illuminating. Yet, most articles dealing with European and

American writers, impress one by their relatively tolerant and broad-minded viewpoint. The savage attacks on bourgeois culture and the Russian "cosmopolites," so characteristic of the post-World War II era, make this Encyclopedia somewhat of an anachronism today. It is probably because of this new anti-Western orientation that Volume X of the Encyclopedia, though published, was never distributed, and Volume XII has not yet seen the light of day.

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